



# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

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WILLIAM PERKINS

1558 - 1602

HIS THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY

By

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To

R. F. T.



WILLIAM PERKINS.



## PREFACE

There are two motives for this study. First and foremost is the spiritual inspiration which was anticipated in a comprehensive examination of the writings of this great Christian Churchman. Coupled with the spiritual values was the corresponding intellectual stimulation of exploring in a relatively new field to this writer. It soon became evident that though great scholars had blazed the trail, still much original research was required. All of this was done with the purpose of more clearly understanding seventeenth and eighteenth century English and American history.

The problem of this study is to define clearly the thought of William Perkins, and to realize how it was applied to sixteenth and seventeenth century Christians. This is what is meant by his activity. Since the emphasis is placed upon his thought, it was considered best not to make an extensive study of his influence on the Continent and in America. That in itself is a topic of major research. Suggestions of his influence are given in the final chapter which indicate to some extent the application of his thought following his death.

The purpose of this thesis is twofold, immediate and remote. The immediate purpose is to orient our minds to a relatively forgotten field of study, the English Puritans, particularly through the writings of one of its early expon-

ents. Also, another immediate purpose is to indicate and examine the religious implications of those writings to the men of that day. More remotely, the purpose is to present the thought so that the reader can make clear deductions for himself of the relationships of Perkins' thought and activity upon present day Christian society. Also, it is trusted that those who read this thesis can share some of the joy of its preparation and the revitalized Christian experience the writer received as a result of the study.

This research is justified, first, because of the fascination of the subject of Elizabethan religious history, and also the place of early English Puritanism in the progress and development of Protestant theology. In the second place, the early seventeenth century Puritans set a pattern of thought and conduct which was followed for nearly a century by its adherents in this country and in America. So, the historical inferences are of major value not only in determining the source of our thought and conduct, but in reminding the twentieth century students of forgotten men who aided in setting the course of our Protestant Christian faith.

The mode of procedure that was followed in the preparation of the thesis should be explained. The consultations with both Principal Charles Duthie and the Right Reverend Hugh Watt, D.D. were most helpful in the initial stages of research. Correspondence with Professor Geoffrey F. Nuttall relating to bibliographical materials was an aid at the out-

set. Acquaintance was made with the sequence of historical events preceding the birth of the seventeenth century. Attempts were made to place the life and experiences of Perkins in relation to those events. The intensive study of Perkins' works and those of contemporary Puritans and Continental Reformers was understandable when a knowledge of the Tudor days was gained. Reading and rereading, thinking and rethinking were most necessary before the preparation of the manuscript in its initial form. Further suggestions by Principal Duthie were of great assistance before the final writing. Also extensive logical outlining of each chapter before and after completion of the second draft was most helpful in the presentation of the materials, assuring the writer and (it is hoped) the reader of an understanding of the thought and activity of William Perkins.

For the sake of consistency, the writer used American English and spelling for his style of writing, aided by Webster's New International Dictionary, published by G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., London, 1950. This was also indispensable in fully understanding archaic terms so frequently used by Perkins.

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## CHAPTER I

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Conflict and discord are the keynotes of ecclesiastical history in England in the latter half of the sixteenth century. In that day, certain men were convinced that the dark clouds of superstition had not been dissipated in the initial thrusts of the Reformation in England. There arose as a result, a dichotomy within the Church of England which absorbed for the most part the limelight of history in the reigns of the Tudors, and upset the tranquillite d'esprit of the Christian Church in that land. One of those who was convinced of the necessity of further reform was William Perkins. To determine his interest and place among men of like concern, it is well to ask: What is the basis of the contention of these men who became known historically as the Puritans, and what was the moving spirit which drew them to the central themes of doctrine, ethics, and ecclesiastical polity which were so unique to this movement? The answers lie in the historical events of England, beginning with King Henry VIII, but more particularly with his son, Edward VI.

Edward VI received his early education under the tutelage of Richard Cox and John Cheeke. Dr. Cox, later distinguishing himself for his reformation ideas, inculcated into the young

prince the concepts of the Reformation leaders. The young man retained these ideas for use when he ascended the throne on the 19th of February, 1547. The first innovation in the reign of Edward VI was the introduction of the English Book of Common Prayer in 1549. The Mass was suspended, and communion tables replaced the altars in the churches.

Exchange of theological ideas brought the reforming leaders in England and the Continental theologians closer together in spirit. So far had this interchange of ideas extended, that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cranmer, invited Peter Martyr<sup>1</sup> and Martin Bucer, two theologians who were refugees from Continental persecution to the chairs of theology at Oxford and Cambridge respectively.

Their arrival in the two universities was thus nearly coincident with the very important change in the academic constitution brought about in each by the new statutes of Edward VI, - a code which resulted in a transformation scarcely less complete than that inaugurated by Cromwell.<sup>2</sup>

Disputation arose among the students, especially at Cambridge, concerning the doctrine of predestination;<sup>3</sup> for Calvinism was taking the initiative from Lutheranism on the Continent,<sup>4</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> Strype, John, Annals of the Reformation, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1824), I, pt. 1, p. 381.

<sup>2</sup> Mullinger, J. Bass, The University of Cambridge from the Royal Injunctions of 1535 to the Assession of Charles I, (Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1888), II, p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, pp. 88, 114.

<sup>4</sup> Troeltsch, Ernst, The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches, trans. Olive Wyon, (Allen and Unwin, London, 1931), II, pp. 576-577.

was finding fertile ground for discussion among students. It was largely in this manner that Calvinism received its impetus toward becoming the dominant doctrinal basis for the English Reformation.

Crammer realized this unrest among students and clergy, and felt that it was imperative that England no longer remain without a formal declaration of what the Church believed. So he began in 1551 to prepare what eventually became forty-two articles of faith. These articles are still the basis of Anglo-Catholic theology.

Perhaps the final act in the drama during King Edward's day was the establishment of the second Book of Common Prayer, following a review of the liturgy in response to the loud demands of those who seemed to possess more enlightened and established views. After two years of anxious deliberation, there was completed this revised liturgy which was first used by Bishop Ridley in his cathedral in London on the Feast of All Saints in 1552, when he was habited simply in his rochet, for that was all that was required by the rubric of the book.<sup>1</sup> From this event, there came forth a faction within the Church of England which found little room in public liturgy for the practices which had hitherto existed. This faction encouraged the use of the metric psalms in worship.

But in some tract of time, as the Puritan faction grew in

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<sup>1</sup> Heylin, Peter, Ecclesia Restaurata, or the History of the Reformation of the Church of England. (The University Press, Cambridge, 1849), I, p. 269.



strength and confidence, they prevailed so far in most places to thrust the Te Deum, the Benedictus, the Magnificat, and the Nunc Dimittis, quite out of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

This faction received special distinction in 1550 when John Hooper, a man of intense faith and conviction, chosen later to be Bishop of Gloucester, refused to wear the traditional vestments of the Church of England at his consecration. He was convinced that the vestments were relics of popery, destined to obscure the true faith. He was just one of a number of other leaders who thought along similar lines. Among them were John Knox, Peter Martyr, and Richard Rogers. These men felt that progress toward complete reformation in England was proceeding far too slowly, and that Ridley and Cranmer were compromising too much for the sake of unity. This led to controversy, the Puritans in defence of Hooper, and the group led by Cranmer insisting that Hooper conform to tradition in the use of vestments.

Both Peter Martyr and Bucer entreated Hooper to dismiss his scruples and consent to the vestment requirements.<sup>2</sup> On the 8th of March, 1551, Hooper was consecrated as a bishop after ". . . he consented to use the vestments in the ceremonial of his consecration, and to preach in them once, at least, before the court."<sup>3</sup>

Four years later the Catholic Party seemingly was success-

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<sup>1</sup> Heylin, Ecclesia Restaurata, op. cit., I, p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> Marsden, J. B., The History of the Early Puritans, (Hamilton, Adams & Co., London, 1850), p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

ful in its attempt to make its aims felt throughout England, for then John Hooper met his death as a martyr for the Reformation in England. Also dying at the stake was Ridley, "in whose diocese he had been so harshly used . . ."<sup>1</sup>

This affair of bishop Hooper made a deep impression. His elevated position, his popular eloquence, his dauntless courage, and above all his glorious martyrdom enbalméd his memory, and rivetted his opinions in the hearts of the reformers. Other circumstances occurred to keep alive the controversy which had now unhappily arisen.<sup>2</sup>

Those four years were a period mingled with hopes and defeats. In 1553 Queen Mary ascended the throne. In her first proclamation she expressed the desire to return to her faith, Roman Catholicism. It brought hope to men like Cardinal Pole and Gardiner. One of her first Acts was the Act of Repeal<sup>3</sup> which abolished most of what was accomplished in the reign of Edward VI, and conditions reverted to what they were in the latter days of Henry VIII. Then the Queen repealed the Acts of Henry VIII, thereby causing a further retrogression of conditions making them what they were prior to the breach with Rome. Now England was at one with Rome by treaty with the Pope,<sup>4</sup> and the Roman Catholic hierarchy under Bonner and Gardiner came into its own. So vigorously did the Queen work in behalf of Romanism that she arranged for the extermination of anyone who maintained

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<sup>1</sup> Marsden, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Burnet, Gilbert, The History of the Reformation of the Church of England, (William Smith, London, 1841), I, p. 474.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 502.

the faith predominant in the day of Edward. Ridley, Hooper, and Cranmer were just three among hundreds who were burned in the 'purifying' fires of this reign. So loathsome was this method of establishing her religion that it did more to establish the faith of the Reformation than any other single cause.

Many who embraced the Reformed faith realized that they must either seek asylum on the Continent or face the prospect of imprisonment or death. Burnet indicated that hundreds were forced to flee England.

. . . about two hundred of them went away in December: but both in Denmark, where they first landed, and in Lubeck, Wismar, and Hamburgh, to which they removed, they were denied Admittance, because they were of the Helvetian Confession, and in all these Places the fierce Lutherans prevailed: who did so far put off al Bowels, that they would not so much as suffer these Refugees to stay among them, till the Rigors of the Winter were over: but at last they found shelter in Friesland.<sup>1</sup>

They found their refuge among those who adhered to the Zwinglian and Calvinistic doctrines, principally in the Rhine region of Germany and Switzerland. Burnet further tells us that among those who were forced to flee were "Cox, Sandys, Grindal, and Horn; all afterwards highly advanced by Queen Elizabeth."<sup>2</sup> Though the English refugees settled in Strassburgh and Frankfort, Geneva and especially Zurich were their centers of operations. So firmly were friendships established with Continental reformers,

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<sup>1</sup> Burnet, Gilbert, The Abridgement of the History of the Reformation, (W. Churchill, London, 1719), II, p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 208.

that on their return to England, the refugees received help and advice, particularly from Bullinger.<sup>1</sup>

Opportunity came for the refugees in Germany and Switzerland to return home when Queen Mary died, 17 November 1558. Her sister, Elizabeth, was then proclaimed Queen. It was a welcome relief for the Protestants, many of whom were willing to suffer the rigors of a hard winter to travel home. Some returning later, however, brought with them the Geneva Bible, the work of Miles Coverdale, Christopher Goodman, Anthony Gilby, Thomas Sampson, and others.<sup>2</sup> This Bible played a prominent part in later Puritan activity and thought.

The attitude of the new regime was felt on Christmas Day, 1558, and on Coronation Day, when Queen Elizabeth forbade Bishop Oglethorpe, who was celebrating Mass in her presence, to elevate the Host. On both days, the Bishop refused to abide by her request.

Parliament met on the 25th of January, 1559, to consider the alterations in the exercise of religion. Among the first Acts restoring powers to the Crown that were existent in the days of Henry VIII and of Edward VI, two Acts of prime importance were passed, the Act of Supremacy and the Act of Uniformity. The Act of Supremacy restored to the Crown once again the significant place it held over the Church of England prior to the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Parker Society, Zurich Letters, (The University Press, Cambridge, Series I, 1842; Series II, 1865).

<sup>2</sup> Strype, Annals, op. cit., I, pt. 1, p. 343.

reign of Queen Mary. The difference was that Queen Elizabeth refused the title 'Supreme Head' of the Church of England. It was really only the title that Elizabeth renounced, for the Act of submission still placed the control of the Church in the hands of the Crown rather than of the clergy. The clergy were required to subscribe to an oath to the effect that the Queen was the Supreme Governor of the Church of England. If the clergy refused, those objecting were cut off from any ecclesiastical or social benefits.

The Act of Uniformity prescribed the discipline and ceremonial of the Church. The Prayer Book of 1552 was prescribed with slight alterations,<sup>1</sup> namely the omission of the section relating to the real presence of Christ at the Communion Service, in the elements. Also eliminated was the clause in the Litany praying for deliverance from the Bishop of Rome. The Ornaments Rubric was inserted requiring the clergy to wear priestly vestments as used in the second year of the reign of Edward VI, calling for restoration of the alb, cope, and chasuble.

In addition, it was provided that the Queen might further alter the regulations for church ornaments, through the agency of her ecclesiastical commissioners, if she so desired. Acting under this provision of the law, the authorities who drew up the injunctions . . . took two more conservative steps. By royal authority a semi-Catholic form of communion wafer was adopted, and the table when not in use was restored to its altar position.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Strype, Annals, op. cit., I, pt. 1, pp. 120-124.

<sup>2</sup> Knappen, M. M., Tudor Puritanism, (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1939), p. 170.

Though Elizabeth permitted images to be removed from the churches, she still retained the cross and candles in her own private chapel. Needless to say, this caused great dismay among all Protestants. Religion was for her principally a tool for her self-preservation and maintaining her power at all costs. To attain this end, she caused Parliament to pass legislation regulating the Church whose tradition had always been to oppose the powerful secular forces which she represented.

Personal affection and sexual desire were merely pawns in her great game of politics. Religion was but another. . . . She had no sense of internationalism and saw no point in conforming to Swiss or German customs. She preferred a celibate clergy, on her father's model. She liked display and ceremony, light and color. But none of these tastes was more than superficial. . . . Instantly alert, she sacrificed any or all these preferences to the demands of security and power.<sup>1</sup>

Elizabeth could never have been a Roman Catholic. To have been so would have lessened her claim to legitimacy as well as her claim to the throne. However, she found it to her favor to maintain interest and friendship with Philip of Spain, the champion of the Roman Catholic cause. Though she realized the expediency of maintaining Catholic relations abroad, the Act of Uniformity caused the Roman Catholics in England much anxiety, no matter how cautious she was to avoid "clear-cut theological definitions which might alienate potential support."<sup>2</sup> Yet most of the Roman Catholic Party remained perfectly loyal to the Govern-

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<sup>1</sup> Knapton, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., pp. 167-168.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 168.

ment and conformed to the requirements of the Act of Uniformity. There was a segment within the party, led by Campion and the host of priests poured into Britain from Douay Seminary from across the sea, that professed loyalty to the Pope foremost, and likewise exemplified a spirit of resistance to whatever did not conform to the wishes of the Pope. Though small in numbers, this group was strong in influence. Elizabeth, therefore, set a policy to ignore the differences within the Roman Catholic Party and to treat all Roman Catholics as presumably traitors until they prove themselves loyal. The Queen cautiously remaining in the background so that the odium did not fall on her, chose her bishops to carry out her royal prerogatives. These leaders treated disobedience to ecclesiastical law as an offense against the Supremacy, bringing such contumacious disobedience under the treason laws. The Church would then excommunicate for the same offense.

The same struggle of ecclesiastical discipline was carried on between the Supremacy and the Calvinistic nonconformists. Some historians have depicted the Puritan objection to the Act of Uniformity as just a trite argument over vestments, and because this argument was not settled to the liking of the Puritans, the Separatist movements developed. It so happened that the vestment controversy was primarily the outward expression of some fundamental problems that were plaguing the Church. The Puritans were convinced that the civil authorities had no jurisdiction other than civil. The Queen could not determine the consciences

of her subjects. If this is true, then it stands that the subjects are not required to believe or worship in the manner of the Supremacy. To require such is an invasion of the kingly office of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

If these principles which the Puritans held were maintained, says Neal, "there would have been no room for the disturbance of any whose religious principles were not inconsistent with the safety of the government."<sup>2</sup> However, because uniformity was forced upon the people under the pretence of decency and order, many objected to such legislation as the Act of Uniformity. It was contrary even to the common reason, they argued. In almost everything else variety is the spice of life.

To pass the Puritan movement off . . . lightly, however, . . . is to be woefully superficial. In itself, perhaps the objection to surplices may seem nugatory and quibbling. But behind this objection, if we take the trouble to penetrate, we find the spirit and tremendous moral earnestness of the Reformation. To men who had such a spirit, nothing was trifling or indifferent which in any way imperilled the advance of God's Church. It was just because their earnestness was dismissed as quibbling that the Puritans were forced further and further away from the central position of the Anglican Church.<sup>3</sup>

The Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity stripped the Church of almost all of its remaining bishops, and many of the clergy were forced to seek secular employment.

The Realm had been extreemly visited in the year foregoing

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<sup>1</sup> Neal, Daniel, The History of the Puritans, (R. Cruttwell, Bath, 1793), I, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 127

<sup>3</sup> Nelson, Douglas E., Early English Puritanism as Exemplified in the Life and Works of Henry Smith, (Unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1939), p. 47.



with a dangerous and contagious Sickness, which took away almost half of the Bishops, . . . The rest of the Bishops, twelve Deans, as many Archdeacons, Fifteen Masters of Colleges and Halls, fifty Prebendaries of Catholic Churches, and about eighty Beneficed men were deprived at once, for refusing to submit to the Queen's Supremacy.<sup>1</sup>

Puritanism flourished more noticeably in the universities of the land. It was there that the differences between Romanism, Anglicanism, and Puritanism were brought into sharpest focus. The doctrines of Calvin were now being proclaimed with urgency, particularly at Cambridge. Two tenets of Calvinism were specially emphasized by the Puritans: "the all-sufficiency of Scripture and a thorough-going restatement of the doctrine of original sin."<sup>2</sup> These were universally held among the Puritans. From the practical side of worship, (1) they were unanimous in their disapproval of the ring in marriage. (2) They felt surplices to be superstitious, as was crossing in the Sacrament of Baptism. (3) For the most part, they believed the Prayer Book was far too strict in insisting that the communicants kneel for the reception of the Communion elements. (4) They believed that free prayer in worship is in keeping with the spirit of the Word of God.<sup>3</sup>

So firmly did they place their faith in observances of the Scriptural directives in worship, that the Convocation of 1563,

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<sup>1</sup> Heylyn, Peter, Aerius Redivivus: or The History of the Presbyterians, (Robert Battersby, London, 1672), p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> Davies, Horton, The Worship of the English Puritans, (Dacre Press, Westminster, 1948), p. 7. "And it was precisely on these grounds that Puritans differed from the Anglicans."

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 244.

called by Archbishop Parker, when the Thirty-nine Articles were established, a motion was put forth to the effect that Sundays and special feast days relating to the events in the life of our Lord be observed and that all other holidays be abolished. Other suggestions relating to worship and clerical dress were clearly defined. These failed in a ballot by just one vote, and that by proxy. This Convocation determined the course Puritanism should follow. In the following year, Queen Elizabeth directed her two archbishops to inquire into the diversities in doctrine and worship among the clergy, and to bring about a much greater uniformity of worship.

In attempting to follow out the Queen's commission, Archbishop Parker issued certain Articles designated by the title Advertisements. These Articles, among other things, demanded that all licenses to preach, bearing a date prior to the 1st of March 1564, were invalid and would be renewed for those of the clergy who prove themselves worthy. One of the proofs demanded was the willingness to abide by the prescribed clerical garb at the Holy Communion. Again the Puritans were placed in an uncomfortable position.<sup>1</sup> They appealed by letter to the court and to the Swiss divines who suggested they conform. Yet, the Puritans seemed unwilling to take any definite legal steps to defend themselves. They may well have taken such actions since the Advertisements were issued without royal sanction. The

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<sup>1</sup> It was in protest to such use of force that resulted in the coining of the derogatory term 'Puritans'; i.e. those who failed to conform.

Queen was very careful to shift the responsibility for such an unpopular regulation to Archbishop Parker. Bishop Grindal was among those who had originally gathered to draft the Articles, yet he was most reluctant to put them into practice. Recalcitrants were treated lightly, and Parker was astonished to learn that later some of them were appointed by Grindal or the Mayor of London to preach at Paul's Cross. More extensive efforts were made to force the clergy to abide by the demands of the Advertisements. No new licenses were issued to non-conformists after the 1st of April 1565.<sup>1</sup>

Opposition was continuing to rise in the learned centers. Such coercion drew these nonconformists into a party. Soon a controversy arose within the party giving rise to the Separatist movement. The Separatists agreed with the main body of the Puritans that adherence to the Reformed faith was a basic principle of Puritanism, as was the denial of the royal right to compel beliefs and actions they believed to be contrary to the Scriptures. In addition, the Separatists "added a refusal to make the preaching of the gospel subject to a popish license, and so by implication claimed also the right to maintaining separate assemblies."<sup>2</sup>

The Separatists placed the main body of Puritans in rather an awkward position. The Puritans agreed that there was some basis for the Separatist's position, but were not in agreement

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<sup>1</sup> Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 213.

with the mode used to attain the ends.

To separate from a church sound in doctrine, however corrupt in ceremonies, in their judgment was to destroy the unity of the Protestant forces and eventually to ruin the cause of clerical idealism altogether.<sup>1</sup>

This forced the Puritan leaders to fight on the left as well as the right, believing that the leftist tactics of the Separatists endangered the whole reform movement.

Among those who adhered to the middle position - the main body of Puritans - was Thomas Cartwright, a man who was distinguished by his profound knowledge and ability as a theologian at the University of Cambridge, where he was a fellow in St. John's College, and later a major fellow at Trinity. Mullinger indicates that his sermons at Great St. Mary's Church

were attended by such numbers, that it is said that when he preached the windows of the church were removed in order that those who were unable to find a place within might hear him from outside.<sup>2</sup>

Cartwright was a Calvinist from his earliest scholastic years. This was probably due to the rapid spread of the doctrines of Calvin through most of the colleges of the University in that day as a result of the influx of foreigners after the French Reformation and the St. Bartholomew Massacre.<sup>3</sup> This conviction received prominence when he was chosen to be one of the debaters to address the Queen upon her royal visit

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<sup>1</sup>Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., pp. 213-214.

<sup>2</sup> Mullinger, op. cit., II, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> Campbell, Mrs. W. W. D., "Early English Presbyterianism", Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England, II' (May 1922), p. 123. Cf. ibid., "The Huguenots and English Presbyterianism," II, (May 1921), p. 28.

to Cambridge. On the completion of the debate, she bestowed an annual pension of twenty pounds upon Thomas Preston, antagonist of Cartwright's in the debate.<sup>1</sup> Some have classified Thomas Cartwright as a bigot in his actions before the Queen, but evidence seems to be against such an assumption.<sup>2</sup> He stood before the Queen firm in his convictions that the Sovereignty of God does not support an earthly monarch (Preston's contention being the affirmative).

John Whitgift, a classmate of Thomas Cartwright, was also influenced by Calvinism as it spread through St. John's College at Cambridge. So strong was the influence, that though he changed ecclesiastical loyalties, his theological foundation remained grounded in the thought of the great Geneva theologian.

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<sup>1</sup> Heylyn, Aerius Redivivus, op. cit., pp. 227-228, claims that Cartwright became jealous at the Queen's gift to Preston; that later he wanted to match Whitgift's authority, and thus sought influence to gain the Lady Margaret Chair of Divinity. Later when expelled from the chair, he threatened revenge. Thomas Fuller, History of the University of Cambridge, (Thomas Fegg, London, 1840), p. 196, mentioned the incident, but added: "But Mr. Cartwright's followers (who lay the foundation of his disaffection to the discipline established in his conscience, not carnal discontentment) credit not the relation; adding moreover, that the Queen did highly commend, though not reward, him. But whatever the cause, soon after he went beyond the seas and after his travels returned a bitter enemy to the hierarchy." Cf. Pearson, A. F. Scott, Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism 1535 - 1603, (The University Press, Cambridge, 1925), p. 11. "Let it be noted however, that Heylyn, who passes many an unfavourable verdict upon Cartwright, especially in Aerius Redivivus is so inaccurate a recorder of facts and so partial an interpreter of history that he must be regarded as a thoroughly unreliable guide." Cf. Strype, Annals, op. cit., I, pt. 2, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> Pearson, op. cit., pp. 12-16.

Whitgift, too, was numbered among those with Puritan leanings while a student at the University. In 1567, however, he renounced his Puritan leanings and became Master of Trinity College at the University. Toward the end of 1569, Whitgift resigned his Regius professorship of Divinity, and William Chaderton was chosen his successor. Now, Chaderton had great influence among the younger men who possessed Puritan leanings, particularly Cartwright and later William Perkins. When Chaderton left the Lady Margaret professorship for the Regius post, Thomas Cartwright was elected to fill the vacancy. It was not long before this young professor signified his theological and ecclesiastical position. In the Spring of 1570, he began a series of lectures on the Book of Acts. It was from this study of Scripture that he deduced a system of Church government that was contrary to that of the Church of England. Such a departure caused great dismay within the University. Appeals were made by the heads of the school to Cecil, the Chancellor, who instructed Cartwright to refrain from discussing such ideas. Mullinger, trying to seek the cause of Cartwright's conviction, finally concluded that the Professor of Divinity may have felt his teaching was no more alien to the Church of England than was the doctrine of the Church of England alien to the creed of the founder of the Chair of Divinity which he occupied.<sup>1</sup> Eventually Cartwright was forced to surrender his appointment to the Lady

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<sup>1</sup> Mullinger, op. cit., II, p. 208.

Margaret professorship, and was later expelled from the University.<sup>1</sup>

Before leaving the University, Cartwright had developed the basis of what became Presbyterianism in England, based on the Geneva model of the Reformed Church. He sternly held that nothing was to be established as ecclesiastical polity that did not conform to Scripture. This eliminated for him the office of archbishop and archdeacon.<sup>2</sup> This Presbyterian scholar established his ecclesiastical government so that the bishops and deacons should fulfill their purposes as found in the Apostolic Church, the bishops handling the spiritual aspects of the work of the Church while the diaconate cared for the poor. He agreed that ministers and presbyters ought to control the congregations, not bishops or archdeacons. He also expressed views thoroughly Puritan regarding public worship. Cartwright could see no reason why it is necessary for the congregation to stand during the reading of the Gospel, and to bow at the name of Jesus. This is in keeping with his views on equal reverence to all of Scripture. He further advocated that it was just as correct to sit as to stand or kneel at Holy Communion. The sign of the Cross at baptism was superstitious, as was fasting on Friday and the special observances at Lent.

It is evident that in the decade 1560-1570, the crisis with-

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<sup>1</sup> Pearson, op. cit., pp. 42-57, 63.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 28-29 for fuller treatment of Cartwright's ideas.

in the Church of England changed from one of vestments to one of ritual and later polity.<sup>1</sup> Great was the part Thomas Cartwright played in this transition. He saw that the evils he deplored were solidly rooted within the Church. Though forced to leave England, his ideas remained behind to grow and develop. Two of these ideas were: The Discipline and Propheying. The Discipline referred to the safe-guarding of Church membership, thus keeping the purity of the Holy Communion. Propheying had reference to the edifying of the spiritual side of the Church government, bringing about spiritual unity among its members and those of other congregations. The Classis or larger Presbytery was one of the fruits of Propheying.<sup>2</sup>

All this ecclesiastical and voluntary action of a Church within the Church was as yet without legal sanction, but after much deliberation it was resolved to aim at this through 'An Admonition to Parliament', in 1572, there being many well-known and influential members in full sympathy.<sup>3</sup>

The Queen became incensed at the Admonition being referred to Parliament instead of directly to her, feeling it to be an invasion of her own pet prerogatives. As a result, two men who

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<sup>1</sup> Mullinger, op. cit., II, p. 196. So perturbed were the students in Cambridge at the existing ritual that they broke stained glass windows in the college chapels containing prayers to the dead.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Pearson, op. cit., pp. 74-81.

<sup>3</sup> Drysdale, A. H., "Summary of Early English Presbyterian Contendings", Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England, I, (May 1915), p. 34. Cf. Frere, W. H. & Douglas, C. E., Puritan Manifestoes, (Society for Promotion of Christian Truth, London, 1907), pp. 5-55.



signed the Admonition, John Field and Thomas Wilcox, were imprisoned. It was Dr. Whitgift's task to answer the Admonitions which demanded the abolishing of Episcopacy for the establishment of the Presbyterian form of Church government.<sup>1</sup> This answer started a steady stream of literature pouring from the presses, both for and against the cause of the Established Church, a stream reaching its height in the sixteenth century in the famous Marprelate tracts.

Cartwright returned from the Continent and took up the challenge, and knowing this prerogative to be founded on an Act of Parliament, promptly issued 'A Second Admonition', but had instantly to retire abroad again, whence he and his colleague in Antwerp, Walter Travers, directed the movement.

Richard Hooker, in 1594, about twenty years after the Second Admonition was released, published the first four books of his famous Ecclesiastical Polity, championing the Elizabethan Religious Settlement. One of the principal distinctions made by Hooker was the identification of the Church with the Commonwealth, each being a different aspect of the same government. It was a defence of the domination of the Church by the civil power, preventing the Church from even spiritual independence. This subordination, termed Erastianism, was ably justified by Hooker. In the first five books, Hooker attacked the Puritan position, presenting the later history of Puritanism in its

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Drysdale, A. H., History of the Presbyterians in England, (Pub. Committee of the Presbyterian Church in England, London, 1889), pp. 150-156.

<sup>2</sup> Drysdale, "Summary of Early English Presbyterian Contendings", op. cit., p. 34.

various aspects, and further, revealing certain real dangers. Then he developed a positive note, showing that the Puritan emphasis on sermonizing and preaching is exaggerated beyond its real practical value. Hooker further attacked the Puritan method of proof-texts from the Scriptures used to prove their various points. Regarding theology, he attacked the Puritan conception of revelation. He also believed that Calvin's authority was overrated by them. Reason is given a prominent place in Ecclesiastical Polity in the interpretation of Scripture. This was antithetical to the Puritan enlightenment.

In the year 1575, great changes took place. Archbishop Parker died. Grindal was moved from York to Canterbury to succeed him. He was a mild man with sympathies directed toward the Puritans, though he had little patience toward the Presbyterians. Grindal faced one great problem - Propheying. This practice had grown in three or four years from its inception to be widely practiced within the Church.<sup>1</sup> He was faced with the question whether to permit the practice to continue, or agree with the Queen's accusation that the rite and rituals of the Church were not being observed in the Propheying. Propheying involved the assembly of clergy and perhaps laity periodically to exercise and increase their ability as preachers, to broaden their grasp on theology and to enhance their critical faculties. The most famous of these propheying was organized at Northampton, with the approval of the bishop and

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<sup>1</sup> Supra, p. 19.

mayor.<sup>1</sup>

Hallam describes the nature of the Prophesying:

They met . . . to expound and discuss together particular texts of Scripture, under the presidency of a moderator, appointed by the bishop, who finished by repeating the substance of their debate with his own determination upon it. These discussions were in public; and it was contended that this sifting of the grounds of their faith, and habitual argumentation, would both tend to edify the people, very little acquainted as yet with their religion, and supply in some degree the deficiencies of learning among the pastors themselves.<sup>2</sup>

Grindal was eventually virtually deprived of his office because of his inclination toward the Puritan cause in support in Prophesying. Yet it was he who first declared the superiority of the sermon over the brief homily being delivered from the pulpits in the Church of England to that date.<sup>3</sup>

The death of Grindal in 1583, brought Whitgift to Canterbury as his successor. Here was a man who was now unfriendly to the ideas of Puritanism in general. It was during the remaining years of Queen Elizabeth that the controversy changed from a matter of vestments and ritual to a theological controversy.

Whitgift's primacy was distinguished because of the vigor displayed in promulgating the decrees of the monarch. Though steps were taken through the Lambeth Articles and the suppression of Puritan printing, especially the Marprelate tracts, Whitgift

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<sup>1</sup> Nelson, op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Hallam, Henry, The Constitutional History of England, (John Murray, London, 1842), pp. 192-193. Cf. Fuller, Thomas, Church History of Britain, (Thomas Tegg, London, 1837), III, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Davies, op. cit., p. 186.

is only important to this discussion hereafter as the theological controversies developed.

Cambridge was still the growing center of Puritan activity, although the court was keeping a closer watch on their activities. Now Puritans were prohibited from being heads of colleges.

But even where the heads were hostile, the fellows could do much, as the case of Christ's College shows. There, Hawford, the Master, was a conservative; but in spite of his influence, Edward Dering, . . . and other fellows began a tradition which for the decades before the foundation of Emmanuel made that college the greatest Puritan seminary of them all.<sup>1</sup>

Some others who exerted influence at Christ's College were Nicholas Crane, Laurence Chaderton, Richard Rogers, William Perkins, William Ames, John Baynes, and Arthur Hildersam.<sup>2</sup>

"With students living in close contact with such men, often sleeping in trundle beds at their tutor's feet, it is easy to see how they would be influenced by the Reformed ideas."<sup>3</sup>

Intellectual respectability played an important part in the spread within Cambridge of the Puritan ideas. It was natural for these scholars to examine the new thoughts and ideas that flowed to England from the Continent. One of these new ideas introduced to the Cambridge students was the logic of Peter Ramus, a French Roman Catholic scholar turned Calvinist, who was martyred in the St. Bartholomew Massacre ten years after his

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<sup>1</sup> Mullinger, op. cit., II, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., p. 219. Cf. Knappen, M. M., Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries, (Amer. Soc. of Church History, Chicago, 1933), p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., p. 219.

renunciation of Roman Catholicism.

While a student at the University of Paris in 1536, Ramus wrote his Master of Arts thesis on the subject, "All that Aristotle said is false."<sup>1</sup> His two works, Aristoticae Animadversiones and Dialecticae Institutiones, both of which were written in "elegant humanistic Latin,"<sup>2</sup> were circulated widely and were in the hands of Cambridge students and lecturers at the latter half of the century.<sup>3</sup>

Ramus' contribution to the Cambridge fellowship of Puritans was his method of logic. His was the transition system between the older Scholasticism and the later Cartesian school. It seemed to fit the Puritan methodology, for he advocated a closer relation between logic and rhetoric, "Between the art of exposition and the art of argumentation."<sup>4</sup> This was quite a step for the Puritans, who were on the whole staunch Calvinists, particularly when one realizes that Calvin's metaphysics were

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<sup>1</sup> Waddington, Charles, Sa Vie ses Ecrits et es Opinions, (Librairie De Ch. Mayrueis Et. Ce, Editeurs, Paris, 1855), p. 28. "Quaecumque ab Aristotele dicta essent, comenticia esse."

<sup>2</sup> Turner, William, "Peter Ramus", The Catholic Encyclopedia, edited Charles G. Herderman, et. al. (New York, 1911), XII, p. 638.

<sup>3</sup> The work familiar to Cambridge students was: Dialecticae Libri duo, Scholiis G. Tempelli Cantabrigienses illustrati . . . Cantabrigiae, ex Officina Thomae Thomasii 1584. There was a more popular edition with commentary by George Downname, who originally set it forth in lecture form in 1590.

<sup>4</sup> Turner, op. cit., p. 639.

still bound to Aristotelianism and medieval Scholasticism. It was the aim of Ramus to free theology from the subtleties of Scholasticism, establishing the Bible as the only standard of faith.

Ramus defined logic (dialectic) as "L'art de raisonner,"<sup>1</sup> and began his system with the principle that the power of reason is an inherent quality within every man. Therefore, he destroyed the contention of some thinkers that Aristotle was the first logician. There appears to be only one authority, and that is reason, natural reason.<sup>2</sup> One could easily mistake his general principle as one set forth by the later Cambridge Platonists, for he wrote: "Nulle autorite n'est au-dessus de la raison; c'est elle, au contraire, qui fonde l'autorite et qui doit la regler."<sup>3</sup> The parts of the Ramian logic are two: invention and judgment. Judgment breaks down to three sub-heads, enunciation, syllogism, and method. The rules of logic are embraced in the two parts. Reason is the means through which these perform.

Ramus was profoundly influenced by the Platonic concept of a world built upon ideas. Platonic thought played a dominant role in the development of his system. Perhaps it was this Platonic concept of ideas which made his system of logic so acceptable to the Puritans. The Platonic concept of "exempla

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<sup>1</sup> Waddington, op. cit., p. 367.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 343.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 343.

in the mind of God was part and parcel of the Christian tradition, and Puritans held it as much because of Augustine as because of Ramus; . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Ramus firmly believed that it was not valid to assume that Aristotle could be defended by Scripture. Aristotle was a philosopher and ought to be discussed from the viewpoint of philosophy, subject to having his thought evaluated and criticized. Herein lies the significance of Peter Ramus, that he was the first to attack Scholastic Aristotelianism, a thing that no Puritan would attempt. It opened a new field of thought that provided a sound basis for the entire Puritan approach to doctrine. They accepted his methodology, but rejected much he presented theologically as being too heavily flavored with humanism.

Other ideas stirred Cambridge, especially in the last decade of the sixteenth century. William Barrett, a fellow at Caius College, delivered a sermon in Latin before the clergy in St. Mary's Church, Cambridge. His principal theme was an attack on the Calvinistic concept of predestination. After much conflict with the authorities, Barrett appealed to Archbishop Whitgift, claiming that what he had proclaimed was not contrary to what the Church of England held, but in further defence pointed out that there was one, William Perkins, among his Puritan accusers, who did digress from the doctrinal position of

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<sup>1</sup> Miller, Perry, & Johnson, T. H., The Puritans, (American Book Co., New York, 1939), p. 31, note.

the Church.<sup>1</sup> It was this sermon and the subsequent appeal to Whitgift that caused the Archbishop to summon a committee to draft the Lambeth Articles,<sup>2</sup> intended to counteract the growing Arminianism among the younger clergy of the Church of England.

In the same year, Peter Baro, a Frenchman occupying the Lady Margaret Chair of Divinity, delivered a sermon at St. Mary's Church criticizing the Lambeth Articles.<sup>3</sup> The immediate result was that the vice-chancellor and the heads of the colleges prohibited him from discussing further the Lambeth Articles. He was not suspended but left the University when he failed to apply for the biennial reappointment to the chair. Both Baro

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heywood, James & Wright, Thomas, Cambridge University Transactions, (Henry G. Bohn, London, 1854), I, pp. 564-568. Barrett's main objection was to Perkins' "An Exposition of the Symbole or Creede of the Apostles," published by the University printer, in which Perkins questioned the doctrine of the descent into Hell of our Lord as declared in the Creed. Barrett seemed to have been unfamiliar with the general Calvinistic thought on the matter. Cf. *infra*, p. 151 f. for Perkins' convictions.

<sup>2</sup> Fuller, Thomas, Church History of Britain, (Thomas Tegg & Son, London, 1837), III, pp. 147-148. Cf. Hunt, John, Religious Thought in England, (Strahan & Co., London, 1870), p. 93. These authors set forth the nine propositions of the Lambeth Articles.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Toplady, Augustus, Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England, (George Keith, London, 1774), II, pp. 532-540; cf. p. 503. Toplady describes the rise of Arminianism in England as due to the spread of the books of Castalio, a Frenchman, "extremely poor, but very Learned and Ingenious. Though he always continued a Lay-man, he was yet a perpetual Dabbler in Divinity; his peculiar notions in which, he sought to obtrude upon other People, with much Bigottry, and sometimes with little Decency." He turned against predestination by degrees. He taught Greek in Basel and died there in 1563. His writings caused great alarm in the Church of England.



and Barrett were representative of a general spirit of rebellion against traditional Calvinism. This rebellion, though not extensive at that time, could not be minimized.

It was on doctrinal issues rather than ecclesiastical polity that the Puritans took their stand in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign. "Instead of contending about vestments and ceremonies, they now strove respecting great and important doctrines, and began to be termed Doctrinal Puritans."<sup>1</sup>

Hetherington suggests that this new trend led to two results: the Prelatists, as he termed the Anglicans, swung further from the Puritans' doctrinal position; and it caused the Puritans to examine profoundly those points of doctrine which were the basis of controversy. "This may account for the remarkable power with which the Puritan divines . . . explain the most . . . profound truths of the Christian revelation."<sup>2</sup>

Conditions in England were ripe for the ethical proclamations of the Puritans. The rise of the drama was one of the first tragets. Many Puritans identified the drama with paganism, and as such, it should be banned from the Christian community.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, a bitter attack fell upon the theater from certain religious and ethical protestors.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hetherington, W. M., History of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, (Johnston & Hunter, Edinburgh, 1856), p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> Heywood & Wright, op. cit., I, p. 185; II, p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> Lee, Sidney, "The Last Years of Elizabeth," The Cambridge Modern History, (The University Press, Cambridge, 1904), III, p. 372.

The principal ethical controversy between the Church of England and the Puritans lay in Sabbath observance, and reached its climax in 1595. Dr. P. Bound published a treatise on Sabbath observance in that year, maintaining "its perpetual sanctity, as a day of rest equally from business and recreation, that it might be devoted wholly to the worship of God."<sup>1</sup> The Puritans loyally supported this contention while the high churchmen accused them of placing an uncalled-for restraint upon Christian liberty. They further added that it was improper to exalt the Sabbath above the other Church festival days.

Another factor in the Puritan protest was the annual or special ceremonial days.<sup>2</sup> These occasions plus the annual fairs appropriated not only much of the people's time which could have been spent on items of far greater importance, but some days of celebration caused a grave corruption of manners, such corruption giving rise to the Puritans' vociferous protestations.

Bear and bull-baiting as well as bear-whipping were 'so-called' sports that were bitterly denounced by the Puritans.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hetherington, op. cit., p. 59. Cf. Fuller, Church History of Britain, op. cit., III, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> Dexter, H. M., & Dexter, Morton, The England and Holland of the Pilgrims, (Archibald Constable, London, 1906), p. 16, lists the days: "such as Christmas, New Year's, May Day, Twelfth Day, Plough Monday, Shrove Tide, Easter, Whitsunday, Candlemas Day, Martinmas, All Hallow's Eve, and Sheep-sheering with Church-ale, Leet-ale, Lamb-ale, Bride-ale, Clerk-ale and others."

<sup>3</sup> The bear or bull was chained securely. Then dogs were turned loose to worry the unfortunate animal to death. In bear-whipping, the blindfolded bear was chained and flogged to death.

These sports were not only popular among the common people. Even Queen Elizabeth and the nobles gained great delight in viewing such happenings.

In fact, the Privy Council, in 1591, issued an order that no plays should be exhibited on Thursday, because on that day bear-baiting and such like pastime had been practised; 'which are maintained for her majesty's pleasure.'<sup>1</sup>

As a result of the extensive privateering activities which received the unofficial sanction of Elizabeth, and operated by 'gentlemen' who risked their investments in these precarious activities, there arose a class of usurers who caused great anxiety during this time. The privateers occasionally lost everything they possessed while engaged in operations, and were then forced to borrow huge sums of money to outfit and equip their ships. The legal interest on loans was ten percent, but ways were found to bypass the law. "Twenty five percent was a common rate and frequently even this was much exceeded."<sup>2</sup> Even the Dean of York was a noted usurer. He was known to take fifty to one hundred percent interest on loans.

The Puritans found such abuses excellent targets for their sights, so bent were they on reform in the Church of England. Why then, one may ask, were the Anglicans not for reform? What made the Puritans a distinctive element within the Church? To summarize the presentation heretofore: the point of separation

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<sup>1</sup> Campbell, Douglas, The Puritans in England, Holland, and America. (James R. Osgood, McIlvaine & Co., London, 1892), I, p. 340.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 373.

between the Puritan and the Anglican lay in the matter of authority. What is the authority for our beliefs, our mode of worship, and the standard of practical Christian living? The Puritan answer was found in the revealing Word of God which they believed was wholly inspired as God spoke. The Scriptures contained everything needed for the doctrinal basis, ecclesiastical polity, in fact all that is necessary for the role of the Christian in society. The Anglican thought this concept of authority was beyond the original intent of Scripture. Richard Hooker in his Ecclesiastical Polity, set forth the position of the Church of England, that the Word of God as found in the Bible was primarily only a general outline of the Christian faith, that God expected men in addition to use their reason, and to adapt themselves to changing circumstances. The Bible set forth for mankind only those things which mankind could not learn through reason.

It was the Puritans' attack on the sacerdotalism and institutionalism practiced in the Church of England that led to the great struggles of the next century. The Puritan belief that every man could experience God directly therefore removed any need for an intermediary. Historically, the Church of England stood parallel to the Church of Rome as an intermediary for its people, especially with the priesthood, its orders and its bishops, much of which was retained in the English reformation. To banish such an institution was to the Anglican like tearing the heart out of religion. Tradition was like what mortar is to a foundation stone.

Such was the temperament and conditions of the times in which William Perkins lived, and such was his vital interest.

## CHAPTER II

### HIS LIFE

The early life of William Perkins would never have led anyone to think of him as a minister of the Gospel. He was born in 1558 at Marston Jabbett in the parish of Bulkington in Warwickshire, the son of Hannah and Thomas Perkins. He was sent from grammar school, where he received his academic education, to Christ's College in the University of Cambridge where he matriculated in June 1577 as a pensioner. While at the University as an undergraduate, he was inclined toward the mathematical sciences. Certain people misconstrued this attachment as a fondness for magic.

His social life at the University was exemplified by certain irregular acts and behavior. "At his first coming to the University he was profane and 'prodigal', and addicted to drunkenness."<sup>1</sup> Tradition has it that he was walking in the town of Cambridge one day when he heard a woman say to a fretful child, 'Hold your tongue, or I will give you to drunken Perkins, yonder.' This caused deep chagrin, and was the initial step toward his later conversion, if the story is true. Middleton and Fuller suggest that this prodigality was providential. Because

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<sup>1</sup> Cooper, Charles & Cooper, Thomas, Athenae Cantabrigienses, (Deighton Bell & Co., Cambridge, 1861), II, p. 335.

of it, when he became a preacher, he could sympathize with men who trod in similar pathways of defilement, and as a result could more effectively counsel them in their repentance to God.<sup>1</sup>

He completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1580/1, and was elected a fellow of Christ's College at the age of twenty four in 1582. He then proceeded toward his Master of Arts degree in 1584, at which time he devoted himself wholly to the study of divinity, having entered holy orders. Besides being a fellow, he was also elected catechist of the College. This led him to deliver a series of lectures on the Ten Commandments which made a marked impression on the students who were under his tutelage.

One of the products of his conversion was his volunteer work among the prisoners in the Castle of Cambridge. His preaching to these men was so effective that people from the nearby parishes came to hear him in the little shire-house adjoining the Castle. His fame as a preacher soon spread. This led to his being appointed lecturer at Great St. Andrew's Church in Cambridge. People came from far and wide to hear him. Fuller said: "His sermons were not so plain but that the piously learned did admire them, nor so learned but that the plain did understand them."<sup>2</sup> He is further said to have been able to pronounce

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<sup>1</sup> Middleton, Erasmus, Biographia Evangelica, (J. W. Pasham, London, 1780), II, p. 322. Cf. Fuller, Thomas, Abel Redivivus, or The Dead Yet Speaking, (London, 1651), p. 432.

<sup>2</sup> Fuller, Thomas, The Holy State and the Profane State, (William Pickering, London, 1840), p. 69.

the word damn with such an emphasis as to leave a doleful echo in his auditors' ears a good while after.<sup>1</sup> He had a unique capacity of adapting his thoughts to his hearers.

. . . Master Perkins so cunningly interweaved terrours and counsels in his Sermons, that as a changable taffaty, where the woofe and the warpe are of severall colours, appeare now of one colour, now of another, according to the different standing of the beholders; so one and the same sermon of his, seemed all law, and all Gospel, . . . , as the different necessities of the people apprehended it.<sup>2</sup>

This capacity of adapting his phrases and style to the common people while yet maintaining a certain profundity which appealed to collegians, brought him great favor with the University, town, and surrounding country, thereby leading to repeated offers for more advantageous situations. However, because of his wife and several children, coupled with his love for the people of the parish of Great St. Andrew's, he refused the offers.

"His income arose entirely from the free contributions of his congregation, aided by gifts from gentlemen in the neighbourhood of whom Mr. Wendy of Hastingfield was chief."<sup>3</sup> At a later date, this small income of Perkins' caused a chilling remorse to fall upon Samuel Ward, first chaplain to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, when he questioned the salary of a post he sought. Ward later left the Puritans.

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<sup>1</sup> Fuller, Holy State, op. cit., p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> Fuller, Abel Redivivus, op. cit., p. 434.

<sup>3</sup> Cooper, Athenae Cantabrigienses, op. cit., II, p. 335.



Another acquaintance, Thomas Whitfield, in January 1626/7, inquires pointedly: 'How many of the worthies of our Church, such as Grenham, Perkins, Rogers, and others, have contented themselves with a fourth part of your allowance?'<sup>1</sup>

As a student, he had a unique talent for reading books rapidly, "and as turning them over would give an exact account of all considerables therein . . . perusing books as speedily, one would think he read nothing; so accurately one would think he read all."<sup>2</sup> This mass of learning was sifted and prepared in such manner that he "did distill and soake much deep Scholarship into his Preaching, yet so insensibly as nothing but familiar expressions did appear."<sup>3</sup> In his earlier years of preaching, he stressed more the judgment of God. Later, the stress was placed on the mercy of God. In his earlier years, he possessed a tendency toward a radical type of Puritanism, but soon he found a milder position. This happened after he was called before Dr. Copcot, Vice-chancellor of the University, having been accused of extreme views by his brother Fellows, namely Bradock, Osborne, Bainbridge, and Baynes.<sup>4</sup> The accusation came as a result of an address delivered in the college chapel on the 13th of January 1586/7 when he denounced the practices of the minister serving Communion to himself, of kneeling at the recep-

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<sup>1</sup> Cooper, Athenae Cantabrigienses, op. cit., II, p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> Knappen, M. M., Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries, (Amer. Society of Church History, Chicago, 1933), p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Fuller, Holy State, op. cit., p. 70.

<sup>4</sup> Appendix I.

tion of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and that of turning to the East. The others had presented their testimonies, but Bainbridge closed with this observation of Perkins' view regarding kneeling at the Sacrament: "He thought our Savior sat, and 'in his opinion,' it was better to come near to that which He did, than that which was done in time of popery."<sup>1</sup>

Perkins defended himself by declaring that he was willing to administer Communion to himself, though he would rather receive it from another. He denied that kneeling was idolatrous, but indicated he was convinced Christ sat, and that the believer ought to remain as far as possible from idolatry. Looking to the East was a matter of indifference. He confessed his own shortcomings and indiscretions for having spoken as he did at that time.<sup>2</sup>

This noted scholar was brought before his superiors more than once or twice for his Puritan ideas. He did not care to provoke argument or to stir others to nonconformity. He was a man of peace, and was only concerned for the purer reformation of the Church. To attain this greater reformation, he gathered with his Puritan brethren in private fellowships. Fuller declares that he was not active in the meetings.<sup>3</sup> There is indication, though, that Perkins belonged to the Dedham Classis,<sup>4</sup> the

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<sup>1</sup> Brook, Benjamin, The Lives of the Puritans, (James Black, London, 1813), II, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix I

<sup>3</sup> Fuller, Thomas, The Church History of Britain, (Thomas Tegg, London, 1837), III, p. 212.

<sup>4</sup> Usher, Roland G., The Presbyterian Movement in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, (Royal Historical Soc., London, 1905), pp. xviii-xxix, xlv.

larger Presbytery which Thomas Cartwright occasionally visited when he was able to come secretly to Cambridge. It was such a gathering in St. John's College in 1589 that Perkins joined with his brethren in the revising and signing of the Book of Discipline which contained a summary of Puritan Doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

Perkins was brought before the Star-Council to account for his action.<sup>2</sup> Here he took the oath ex officio, and confessed that Thomas Cartwright, Edmund Snape, and others met in Cambridge to discuss matters of discipline. Later he was brought before the high commission occasionally, but because of his reputation as a peaceful scholar, and as a distinguished Fellow, he was released from the persecution that his fellow Puritans received. He was censured by Archbishop Whitgift, however.<sup>3</sup> When the program of uniformity directed by Whitgift imprisoned many of his brethren for nonconformity, Perkins termed it, "The year of the last patience of the saints."<sup>4</sup>

Also in 1589, he was one of a number who petitioned the

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<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, Richard, Dangerous Positions, (R. Young, London, 1640), p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> Strype, John, The Life and Acts of John Whitgift, D. D., (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1822), II, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> There is no record of what the degree of censure was. It may have been a mild censure.

<sup>4</sup> Perkins, William, Workes, (Iohn Legatt, London, 1612), I, Sig. B2. Cf. Churton, Ralph, The Life of Alexander Nowell, (The University Press, Oxford, 1809), p. 323.

authorities of the University in behalf of another Fellow at Christ's College, Francis Johnson, who was imprisoned because he advocated Presbyterian ecclesiastical government.<sup>1</sup> Yet Perkins was always careful in his public utterances not to offend the authorities or to present a false impression. He labored incessantly on his public addresses for clarity and depth of scholarship. So hard did he work that he was commonly called 'painful Perkins'.

He left Christ's College upon his marriage to a widow named Timothye at the time of Michaelmas in 1594. The number of his children is uncertain. He had a daughter, Hannah, who married John Brookes, pastor at Chesterfield.

William Perkins was moderate of stature and ruddy in complexion, having bright hair. He is described as being "very fat and corpulent."<sup>2</sup> His right hand was useless, perhaps withered, causing him to write all his works left-handed. As for his personality, Fuller described him to be

. . . of a cheerful nature and pleasant disposition: indeed to mere strangers he was reserved and close, suffering them to knock a good while before he would open himself unto them; but on the least acquaintance he was merry and very familiar.<sup>3</sup>

Another talent possessed by this servant of God was the presenting of the Gospel to people in distress. He possessed

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<sup>1</sup> Strype, Annals of the Reformation, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1824), IV, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Cooper, Athenae Cantabrigienses, op. cit., II, p. 335.

<sup>3</sup> Fuller, Holy State, op. cit., p. 70.

and practiced the art of personal counselling, particularly in his prison work. On one occasion while attending an execution, he fortified the prisoner whose nerve left him as he mounted the scaffold. Perkins called to him,

'Man, what is the matter with thee, art thou afraid of death?' 'Ah, no (said the malefactor, shaking his head) but of a worse thing.' 'Dost thou so (replied Mr. Perkins) then come down again, and thou shalt see what GOD's grace will do to strengthen thee.' When he came down, Mr. Perkins took him by the hand, and at the foot of the ladder, they both kneeled down, hand in hand, when Mr. Perkins prayed with so much of the divine presence and with such power, in confession of sin, with its aggravating circumstances, and the horrible and eternal punishment due to the same, according to GOD's justice, that the poor man burst out into a flood of tears being broken and contrite in heart; which, when Mr. Perkins observed, he proceeded to the second part of his prayer, in which he set forth the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of every believing penitent sinner, as stretching forth his arms of mercy and power to save him in his miserable distressed condition, and from all the powers of darkness, and to give him heaven and glory. This he was enabled to do in a wonderful and successful manner, that the poor creature continued, indeed, to shed tears; but they were now tears of love, gratitude and joy, flowing from a belief that all his sins were cancelled by the merciful shedding of our Saviour's blood. And when they arose from prayer, he evidenced so good and satisfactory a confession, that the spectators lifted up their hands and praised GOD, for seeing such a glorious display of sovereign grace, in converting, at the eleventh hour, this dying malefactor, who went up the ladder again, with apparent great comfort, and hasting as it were to have the grace he had so lately been made a partaker of, consummated in glory.<sup>1</sup>

Perkins was a skilled polemicist, perhaps the most skilled of the Puritans of his day. He seemed able to maintain himself in his debate on predestination with Arminius.<sup>2</sup> That debate gave rise to further disputes, for "the settlement of which the

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<sup>1</sup> Middleton, op. cit., II, pp. 324-325. Cf. Clark, Samuel, The Marrow of Ecclesiastical History, (The University Press, (Oxford, 1654), pp. 852, 853.

<sup>2</sup> *Infra*, pp. 139 - 151. Perkins had no direct arguments with other theologians. He would have had he lived longer.

Synod of Dort was called in 1618."<sup>1</sup> Professor Haller describes him as "a kind of sixteenth-century William James. He did not so much prove the doctrine of predestination as analyze and depict the human soul with the help of it."<sup>2</sup> He doubtless distinguished himself most in the publication of his Reformed Catholike, a most phenomenal work in his day. So ably did he establish the Protestant position, setting forth the essential points of difference between Roman Catholicism and Protestant belief, that even William Bishop, the Roman Catholic writer,

. . . although he assailed the book in his 'Catholic Deformed', was fain to admit that he had 'not seene any book of like quality, published by a Protestant, to contain either more matter, or delivered in a better method.'<sup>3</sup>

He published more than forty tracts, sermons, and treatises, which are usually bound in three folio volumes, though some editions appeared in two folio volumes.<sup>4</sup> So valued were these tracts and treatises, that many of them were translated into Latin and sent abroad. Still more were translated into French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Irish, and Welsh.

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<sup>1</sup> Colville, Frederick Leigh, The Worthies of Warwickshire, (Henry T. Cook & Son, Warwick, n.d.), p. 575.

<sup>2</sup> Haller, William, The Rise of Puritanism, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1938), p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> Mullinger, J. Bass, "William Perkins", Dictionary of National Biography, edited Sidney Lee, London, 1909, XV, p. 893.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Appendix II for a discussion of disputed authorship of Foure Great Lyers. Cf. Wright, Louis B., "William Perkins, Apostle of Elizabethan Practical Divinity," Huntington Library Quarterly, III, no. 2, January 1940, p. 174. Professor Wright is convinced that Professor Dick has established Perkins to have been the author of Foure Great Lyers.



The popularity of his works can be judged by the extent of their publication. Perhaps the earliest which can be attributed to Perkins is the disputed treatise, Four Great Lyers. It was no doubt first published in the late 1580's, though later it was printed and bound with the treatise, Against Prognostics: An Answer to a Country Fellow.<sup>1</sup> Not long afterward other dissertations were offered for sale. In the first part of the decade 1590 - 1600, his works began to be sought by theologians, students, and even laymen.

A Golden Chaine was first published in Latin in 1590 and translated into English the following year. It was such a popular work that it was republished several times before the close of the century. Also in 1591, The Foundation of the Christian Religion was published. This proved to be a very favorable work among both the Puritans and the clergy of the Established Church. It was translated into Irish, Welsh, and other languages in the following century. The British Museum alone possesses seven editions dating from 1591 to 1677.

Equally accepted was An Exposition of the Lord's Prayer published in 1592. The extent of Perkins' contribution is evident in the numbers of Welsh translations that appeared under the title Agoriad byrr ar Weddi'r Arglwydd. Gan William Perkins. O gyfieithiad R. Holland.<sup>2</sup> As late as a century and a half later, this was considered to be one of the best books on the Lord's

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix II.

<sup>2</sup> "A Short Introduction on the Lord's Prayer by William Perkins. Translated by R. Holland." Robert Holland was vicar of Llanddyfrwr in Carmarthenshire.

Prayer published in that language.

A Case of Conscience and A Direction for the Government of the Tongue, were both published in that same year. The former treatise was the more popular and became a handbook on Christian conduct. It also introduced ethics to Protestantism in Britain.

An Exposition of the Symbole or Creed of the Apostles was published in 1595. The contents caused great consternation among some thinkers of that day. This very fact caused it to be republished and read extensively. Two other doctrinal treatises drew the attention of contemporary theologians three years later, De Praedestinationis Modo et ordine et de amplitudine Gratiae Divinae . . . Christiana disceptatio, and A Reformed Catholike. The following year A Reformed Catholike, one of his better known works, was translated into Spanish. It was translated into Latin by 1601. By inference, the Latin edition must have been the one used by William Bishop in his defence of the Roman Catholic Church.

So popular had Perkins' works become that many were published following his death. However, even before his death attempts were made to collect his works into one volume editions. It was not until 1608 that a more complete publication was produced. The more popular of the earlier editions of his compiled works was the 1612-13 edition. A folio printing was produced in Geneva in Latin in 1611. The same year another edition was produced followed by the second volume in 1618. A three volume



folio was produced in Amsterdam in 1659.

His bound works which are bound in both two and three folio volumes in complete form consist of the following:

The Foundation of the Christian Religion; A Golden Chaine; An Exposition of the Apostles' Creed; An Exposition of the Lord's Prayer; A Declaration Whether a Man be in a State of Damnation or a State of Grace; A Case of Conscience; A Direction for the Government of the Tongue; Two Treatises: One of Repentance, and the Other on the Combat of the Flesh and Spirit; A Treatise How to Live Well in All Estates and Times; A Treatise on Dying Well; A Discourse on the Nature of Conscience; A Reformed Catholike; The True Manner of Knowing Christ Crucified; A Grain of Mustard Seed; Of True Wealth; A Warning Against the Idolatry of the Last Times; A Treatise of God's Free Grace and Man's Free Will; Of Man's Callings; Of Predestination; A Bible Harmony; A Dialogue of the World's Dissolution.

The following, though bound with those listed above, were published after his death.

Three Books of the Cases of Conscience; Commentaries on the Five First Chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians; Of Christian Equity; Of Man's Imagination; The Key of Prophecy; Commentaries on the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Chapters of St. Matthew; Commentaries on the Three First Chapters of the Revelation; Of the Temptation of Christ; An Exhortation to Repentance; Two Excellent Treatises of Ministers' Calling; A Commentary on Jude's Epistle; A Treatise of<sup>1</sup> Poisoning; Against Prognostics; Of Household Discipline.

The posthumous publications were mainly lectures that had been delivered in Great St. Andrew's Church to the students. Some, however, were evidently used as the basis for Bible series presented to the general public.

There were two treatises which are not found in his bound works, and have evidently been lost: The Exposition on Psalms 32 and 100, and Confutation of Canisius's Catechism. These were said to have been published in his collected works. It might be

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Perkins, Workes, op. cit., 1608-09 edition.

supposed that at some time the executors of his estate had considered publishing them, but had decided against it. Or, it may have been that a limited edition of each was published at some time, but there are no copies in the major libraries of Great Britain and America for our perusal today.<sup>1</sup>

His printer in Cambridge remarked in the preface, Address to the Reader,

I here once more present unto you the workes of this worthy man. Reade them diligently, and iudge of them freely. I doubt not but in your exactest censure, you will conspire with those learned Men, who, for the profitable instruction they containe in all, or the most points of Christianitie, for the common good of the Church of God, have deemed them worthe their godly labours, by translating them into diuerse languages, as into Latin, Dutch, Spanish, etc. A thing not ordinarily obserued in other writings of these our times.<sup>2</sup>

It is difficult to determine the extent to which this learned writer was able to influence the mode of thought in that day in England. Haller nevertheless indicates it to have been extensive.

At the turn of the century by far the most important Puritan writer was William Perkins . . . exercising a profound personal influence on the men who were to fill up the ranks of the spiritual brotherhood and make the power of the pulpit feared by reactionary rulers.<sup>3</sup>

Men of both parties in the Church sang his praises for several decades following his death. They quoted him as authoritative, "but little inferior to Hooker or Calvin."<sup>4</sup> From a historical

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<sup>1</sup> Pages 42 to 45 have been amended in accordance with Additional Regulation 12 as described in the University Calendar 1951-1952, p. 624.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., Vol. I, Sig. #2.

<sup>3</sup> Haller, op. cit., p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> Mullinger, "William Perkins", op. cit., XV, p. 893. Also indicated are the men who considered Perkins' word as authority.

standpoint, one cannot fail to comprehend the regard that was held for him by Thomas Fuller, who was not a Puritan.

William Perkins died in 1602 at the age of forty four, following a severe affliction of kidney stone which he bore throughout his latter days with much patience. Just before his death while a friend prayed for the mitigation of his pain, he called out, "Hold, hold! do not pray so; but pray the Lord to give me faith and patience, and then let him lay on me what he pleases."<sup>1</sup> Dr. James Montague, later Bishop of Bath and Wells, and of Winchester successively, preached his funeral sermon using the text, "Moses my servant is dead",<sup>2</sup> and spoke highly of Perkins' learning, piety, labors, and usefulness. So loved was he, that the University paid the expenses of his funeral.

His will, dated the 16th of October, 1602 in Cambridge, was written just a little prior to his death. In substance, it registered bequests to the poor of the parish of St. Andrew's which he served so faithfully, a total of forty shillings. Also he

. . . devised the messuage or tenement in Cambridge wherein he dwelt to Edmund Barwell master of Christ's College, James Montague, D. D., Master of Sidney College, Laurence Chaderton, master of Emmanuel College, Richard Foxcroft, M. A., Thomas Cromptey, M. A., and Nathaniel Cradock, his brother-in-law, to be sold and the money divided into three equal parts, one part to go to Timothye, his wife, the other two amongst his children born or unborn. He also willed the price of his moveable goods and chattels should be divided amongst his wife and children. He appointed his wife sole executrix, and in case of her death before probate of his will, made Nathaniel Cradock his executor. He also bequeathed to his father, mother, brethren, and sisters, 10 s. each; to Richard Love apothecary and his sister-in-law Catherine Cradock, 5 s. each; and to his son-in-law, John Hinde,

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<sup>1</sup> Brook, op. cit., II, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Joshua 1. 2.

his english Bible. Mr. Cradock and Mr. Cropley were appointed supervisors. This will was proved by his widow before Dr. William Smith, vice chancellor, 12, January, 1602/3.<sup>1</sup>

It is recorded that his widow, Timotheye, married twice after Perkins' death, but as Fuller laments, ". . . no more Mr. Perkinses."<sup>2</sup>

Of the friends listed in the will, one man especially exerted great influence on the life and thought of William Perkins. That man was Laurence Chaderton. In noting the highlights of the life of this teacher of Perkins, one can understand more clearly how Perkins was able to arrive at some of the conclusions he maintained, and just why he was the great man he was.

Van Baarsel describes Chaderton: "Hij was Puritein en tegenlijk een overtuigd aanhanger der Staatskerk."<sup>3</sup> He had a distinguished career, beginning with his early days in Christ's College where he made a notable achievement as a tutor, having Perkins as a pupil.<sup>4</sup> He was a staunch Calvinist, yet he ad-

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<sup>1</sup> Cooper, Athenae Cantabrigienses, op. cit., II, p. 337. Evidently the men were to form a committee to arrange sale of the property and to oversee distribution of the proceeds of the sale.

<sup>2</sup> Fuller, Abel Redivivus, op. cit., p. 438.

<sup>3</sup> Van Baarsel, J. J., William Perkins, (H. P. De Swart & Zoon, 's Gravenhage, 1913), p. 31. "He was a Puritan, and at the same time a convinced follower of the State-Church."

<sup>4</sup> Dillingham, W., Laurence Chaderton, D. D., trans. E. S. Shuckburgh, (MacMillan and Bowes, Cambridge, 1884), p. 5.

hered to the method derived from the new Ramian logic that swept the University.<sup>1</sup> Chaderton was an easy mark for such a system of thought, since it represented a protest against medieval Scholasticism.<sup>2</sup> To fully comprehend this easy adherence to Ramian logic, it must be understood that this noted Cambridge teacher rebelled against Roman Catholicism in his youthful days while a student at the University. This rebellion came as an answer to an inner conflict between his ardent Roman Catholic heritage and the new ideas he confronted at the University. The result was the acceptance of the Reformed ideas so prominently expressed in the lecture halls of the University. Because of such a choice, his father suspended further support of Chaderton in his student days.<sup>3</sup>

Several aspects of the compulsions of this man set him apart from his colleagues. These were for the most part, the same aspects that set Perkins apart from his fellows. (1) Chaderton was an outstanding preacher. Wright says that he was known for his plain and direct method of preaching<sup>4</sup> which seemed to go hand-in-hand with his deeply spiritual qualities. He lectured in the afternoons at the Church of St. Clement's in Cambridge. No doubt it was here that Perkins came under Chaderton's influence. Chaderton was Master of Emmanuel College from the

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<sup>1</sup> Mullinger, J. Bass, The University of Cambridge, (Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1888), II, p. 476. Cf. Dillingham, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Supra, pp. 24-26.

<sup>3</sup> Dillingham, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Wright, Louis B., op. cit., p. 172.

year 1584 when the College was founded by Sir Walter Mildmay. These two posts were held simultaneously. (2) He was a defender of the Calvinistic faith against the inroads made by the Arminians. It was in 1581 that he engaged Peter Baro on the question of Calvinism.<sup>1</sup> (3) Chaderton was a moderate and pleaded for gradual reform from within the Church rather than the use of such contentious measures as Cartwright advocated. Perkins had advocated more extreme measures in his youth, but eventually saw the wisdom of Chaderton's position primarily through his encounter with the University authorities. It may have been that Chaderton was one of the authorities who persuaded him to follow a more moderate course. (4) Even though he was a Puritan, Chaderton was also a Churchman. He never joined the element that set forth an appeal against prelacy. This is not to say that he was in favor of the modes and practices of the Church. When the opportunity of a bishopric was placed before him, he refused it.<sup>2</sup> It may have been that he refused because of his advanced age, or because he realized that the measures of reform he advocated could not be furthered through the elevated office. If he pressed for his reform measures, they would have been in opposition to the policy of the Church under Whitgift and Laud.

Another teacher who had an influence on Perkins was

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<sup>1</sup> Brook, op. cit., II, p. 445. Dillingham, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Dillingham, op. cit., p. 17.

Richard Greenham, fellow of Pembroke College, University of Cambridge. He, too, rejected the use of extreme measures to reform the Church of England. Yet he was a supporter of Puritan principles throughout his lifetime. He left his fellowship at Pembroke College and retired to the rectory of Dry Drayton in the immediate vicinity of Cambridge. There he served as a private tutor until 1589. One can justly surmise that William Perkins spent much time with this servant of God. The moderation of this man also became a pattern Perkins was later to heed. One of Greenham's admonitions to young preachers was not to engage in vain controversies.<sup>1</sup> Another factor which seems to have been ingrained in the memory and practice of Perkins was Greenham's social consciousness. There came a time in Greenham's ministry "when a dearth of grain prevailed and the poor were suffering for want of bread, he contrived to sell corn to the needy at prices below the market value."<sup>2</sup> Though the procedure was not imitated, such social awareness and consciousness was deeply rooted in Perkins' life and thought.

One might further remember other men instrumental in the formation of the thought of William Perkins, such men as William Whitaker, Master of St. John's College, Cambridge. There were also the many students whose lust for learning spurred this scholar to new heights of wisdom, students who were later to carve their names in Puritan history.

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, Louis B., op. cit., p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 172.

It is not only the influence of the historical trends and the temper of the times, as well as the convictions of his teachers that determined his thought and activity. Many other known and unknown personal, social, economic, political, moral, and spiritual tides and pressures were exerted upon Perkins to establish him as the leading doctrinal Puritan of his day.

How well-beloved he was to those of his own day, we shall never know. Thomas Fuller expressed the debt his generation owed to Perkins. This verse by Fuller, though poor from a poetical standpoint, nevertheless indicates an attempt to express in words what numerous Christians had felt in their souls.

Of all the Worthies in this learned role,  
Our English Perkins may, without controle,  
Challenge a crowne of Bayes to deck his head,  
And second unto none be numbered,  
For's learning, wit and worthy parts divine,  
Wherein his Fame resplendantly did shine  
Abroad and eke at home; for's Freaching rare  
And learned writings, almost past compare;  
Which were so high esteem'd, that some of them  
Translated were (as a most precious jem)  
Into the Latine, French, Dutch, Spanish tongue,  
And rarely valued both of old and young.  
And (which was very rare) Them all did write  
With his left hand, his right being uselesse quite;  
Borne in the first, dying in the last year  
Of Queen Eliza, a Princesse without peer.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fuller, Abel Redivivus, op. cit., p. 439.





## CHAPTER III

### AS A REFORMER

Perkins seemed, for the most part, to possess a composed mind and spirit. Yet, there were times when he became aroused at the disruptive ecclesiastical conditions of his day. He saw four principal threats to the peace and progress of the Christian Church in England. These perils were atheism, the progress of Arminianism, the presence of the 'heretical' Brownists and Anabaptists, and the power of Roman Catholicism. The latter movement seemed to this Cambridge theologian to be the predominant demoniacal force. His protests were a general reflection of the Puritan fever rising in holy hatred against Roman Catholicism, for ". . . the Puritan never forgot or forgave the Catholic; . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Yet with all of this, he was not oblivious of the spiritual lethargy within his own Church of England. He occasionally penned such pleas as the following:

. . . no doubt for the Gospels sake we haue outward peace and safetie, and many other blessings, and are in account with other nations: yet if we make no conscience to obey the word of God, and if wee haue no loue of Christ and his members, God will at length remooue his candlestick from vs, and vtterly depriue vs of this ornament of the Gospell, & make our land as odious vnto all the world, as the land of the Iewes is at this day. Let vs therefore with all

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<sup>1</sup> Knappen, M. M., Tudor Puritanism, (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1939), p. 352.

care and diligence shew forth our loue both to Christ himselfe, and to our members, and adorne the Gospel which we professe by bringing forth fruit worthy of it.<sup>1</sup>

The real danger to his beloved Church of England, however, lay not within its bounds, but in the pressure of Roman Catholicism in the Counter-Reformation in England. The fires of Smithfield were not to be forgotten, and Jesuitism was rising out of the set-back suffered by the ascendancy of Elizabeth to the throne. The Reformation was far from being complete. Minded of this, Perkins felt obliged to present to the people of England the doctrinal truths of the Church of England in contrast to those doctrines of the Church of Rome. So, in 1598, he published a treatise entitled A Reformed Catholike. This tract became very popular, and gave him a substantial reputation across Europe as a distinguished controversialist in the cause of the Reformation.<sup>2</sup>

So cogent was his reasoning that the Catholics nominated William Bishop, one of their ablest controversialists, to reply. In turn, King James himself took a hand in the argument, by appointing Robert Abbot [Bishop of Chalcedon][sic] to defend Perkins from this attack - a clear indication that Perkins was not considered an extremist among the Puritans.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, William, Workes, (Iohn Legatt, London, 1612), I, p. 226.

<sup>2</sup> The following year, his printer, Robert Field, published the tract in Spanish, after which it was later translated into Dutch.

<sup>3</sup> Wright, Louis B., "William Perkins, Elizabethan Apostle of 'Practical Divinity'", Huntington Library Quarterly, (San Marino, California, Vol. 3, no. 2, January 1940), pp. 189-190.

Perkins' principal thesis, that the Churches of England and Rome are forever irreconcilable,<sup>1</sup> was reiterated later in his commentary on the Pauline epistle to the Galatians. He expressed his thoughts more concretely in this commentary, basing them on the text, "Come out of Babylon, my people, and touch no vncleane thing."<sup>2</sup> Abbot, his defender, maintained Perkins' cause against the arguments from William Bishop, Jesuit priest and champion of Romanism.<sup>3</sup> Abbot's contribution was an enlargement of Perkins' discussion, substantiating the Reformed position. This rebuttal came as a brisk answer to Bishop's treatise, A Reformation of a Catholike Deformed. Robert Abbot was not the only defender of this famous Cambridge divine. Anthony Wotton among others, registered his agreement with Master William Perkins.<sup>4</sup>

## I. THEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

The Reformed Catholike was primarily based on doctrinal agreements and differences between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. The form is indicative of the influence

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, pp. 556-557.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, pp. 323-324. Revelation 18.14.

<sup>3</sup> Abbot, Robert, A Defense of the Reformed Catholike of M. W. Perkins, (Georgii Bishop, Londini, 1606). Perkins died prior to the publication of William Bishop's book.

<sup>4</sup> Wotton, Anthony, A Defense of M. Perkins Booke, Called A Reformed Catholike, (F. Kyngston, 1606).

of the Ramian logic on Perkins.<sup>1</sup> This was not the only place where his message against the Papists is found. William Perkins, throughout his writings, rose in indignation against the 'whore of Babylon, Rome.'

As has been intimated before, Perkins was a thorough-going Calvinist.<sup>2</sup> Particularly is this evident in his discussion of free will. One might surmise that Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion were open beside the Bible as Perkins prepared his manuscripts.

#### A. The Concept of Will

Before the time Dr. William Bishop, later Bishop of Chalcedon, answered the tract A Reformed Catholike, William Perkins focused his attack upon Romanism. Perkins' efforts were levied against the writings of Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, the great apologist of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>3</sup> Even though Perkins was not the object of Bellarmine's criticism, he might well have been.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Van Baarsel, J. J., William Perkins, (H. P. De Swart & Zoon, 's Gravenhage, 1913), pp. 82-89. The author presents the influence of the Ramian logic upon Perkins, emphasizing that the influence was largely formal. Perkins rejected Ramus as being too much of a humanist.

<sup>2</sup> Seldom did Perkins mention Calvin as authority. Instead, he relied principally upon the Bible aided by the Church Fathers.

<sup>3</sup> William Perkins' disagreement with Bellarmine is indirect. The Cardinal's name is never mentioned in the context of the Protestant's arguments. It is worthy of note that Bellarmine's writings were the authorized vindications of the Roman Church and doctrine. Later editions of his works were altered, revised, and corrected under Papal authority. Cf. Tenison, Archbp. et. al., The Notes of the Church as Laid Down by Cardinal Bellarmine, (Samuel Holdsworth, London, 1839), pp. vii-x.

<sup>4</sup> William Whitaker, Parker's teacher, was the focal point of a tract by Cardinal Bellarmine.

Cardinal Bellarmine used as his target the entire school of theological emphasis that Perkins supported. He sought to disprove the Protestant position by the use of both Scripture and tradition.<sup>1</sup> Perkins took the lead among the English theologians in the counter attack by publishing A Treatise of Gods free Grace, and Mans free will. He based the tract upon the Gospel According to St. Matthew, chapter 23, verses 37 and 38. This treatise follows the Reformed Catholike among his compiled works. However, it is basic to a clear comprehension of Perkins' discussion of free will in the Reformed Catholike.

The Cambridge theologian defined will as "... a power of willing, nilling, choosing, refusing, suspending, which depends on reason."<sup>2</sup> Reason is an essential portion of the definition, for that is how Man's acts are determined. Man does evil though he may do good, because it seems best for him to do evil. Every act of will possesses two qualities: "Reason to guide, and Election to assent, or dissent."<sup>3</sup>

The nature of will is described as freedom from coercion.

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<sup>1</sup> Van Baarsel, op. cit., p. 103. Bellarminus kwam met argumenten, geput uit Schrift en traditie, om daarmee de Protestanten te weerleggen). Principieel voerde hij den strijd. De argumenten zijner tegenstanders gaf hij zoo volledig en trouw weer, dat men een tijd lang de verbreiding van zijn werk in Italie niet gaarne zag). "Bellarmine brought forward arguments drawn from Scripture and tradition to refute the Protestant. He fought on fundamental questions. He produced the arguments of his opponents so fully and accurately that for a long period the spreading of his work was frowned on in Italy."

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 722.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 722.

It is not freedom from necessity, because necessity and will may coincide. God wills many things that are necessary. We realize that He willed the filiation of His own Son; also the proceeding of the Holy Spirit from the Son. He further wills justice. All these are necessary. Freedom of the will has a double power. When it wills anything of itself, it can also refuse to will, or it can will the opposite. This freedom is described as the "libertie of contrarietie."<sup>1</sup>

The general definition of will is applied to specific relations in the Godhead. Jesus Christ is first, indicating the two wills, the will of His Godhead which is also the will of the Father and the Holy Spirit, and the will of His manhood. Jesus Christ is the personification of these two wills, the will of God and the will of Man.

The will of God is distinguished as "the will of his good pleasure," and "his signifying will."<sup>2</sup> 'The will of his good pleasure' is conceived in four relationships: first, God's purpose or decree according to judgment. Judgment does not rule His will, since His will is supreme. Therefore, His judgment is according to His will. Second, God's will possesses an absolute power whereby He is Lord of all the actions that He wills. Third, God's will is the first cause of all things, particularly regarding material existence or being, and also regarding the qualities of goodness they possess. Fourth, if God's will is

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, *op cit.*, I, p. 723.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 723.

unknown to us, that will is not then the rule of our faith and actions.

The signifying will of God is described.

. . . when he reuealeth some part or portion of his pleasure, so far forth as it serues for the good of his creature, & the manifestation of his iustice or mercy: this signifying will is not indeed the will of God properly, as the will of his good pleasure is, for it is the effect therof: yet may it truly be so tearmed.<sup>1</sup>

These two wills might be summed as the will of Decision, corresponding to 'the will of his good pleasure', and the will of Command or will to follow through, corresponding to 'the signifying will'.<sup>2</sup>

Man's will also stands in two relations, its nature and its strength. The nature of Man's will is seen in the action, or 'the practise'.<sup>3</sup> 'The practise' is reflected in five ways: the action of the mind, that is, "a consideration of the things to be done;"<sup>4</sup> deliberation of the many means whereby it is to be done; determining what is to be done; choosing or refusing what will or will not be done (Perkins terms this election and most proper to the will); and the maintaining of liberty to make the choice.

Unlike God, Man cannot always carry out his will. He may will to do good, but lack the ability or power to do that which

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 724.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Van Baarsel, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 727.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 727.

he wills. "Will therefore is one thing, and power to do the thing willed, is another."<sup>1</sup> How often we would join with St. Paul in saying, "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; . . ."<sup>2</sup>

There was once a time when this was different. In the estate of innocency before the Fall, Man had the power to will either good or evil. To will good was a gift bestowed by God upon His righteous creation; but Man had also the choice to do evil. If Man was to remain righteous before God, it was necessary to have the power as well as the will to persevere in goodness. That power was granted by God, but He left the act of persevering in goodness wholly to Man. The failure to so persevere brought upon Man the state of unrighteousness.<sup>3</sup>

Man, in the state of unrighteousness or corruption, still possesses the freedom to will or not to will. This freedom is natural to the will, according to the definition.<sup>4</sup> It is not supreme, however. The will cannot be carried out unless God so grants; nor can it will unless God helps it. Even then, sometimes the mind misleads or hinders the will in doing what it desires.<sup>5</sup> When mind and will work together to decide whether

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 727.

<sup>2</sup> Romans 7.15.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 728.

<sup>4</sup> Supra, p. 56.

<sup>5</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 558.



good ought to be sought or not, that is what Perkins meant by free will. In fact, he defined free will as ". . . a mixt power in the mind and will of man; wherby discerning what is good and what is euill, he doth accordingly choose or refuse the same."<sup>1</sup> Bishop could not agree with such a definition, for free will was not a mixed power in the mind and will, according to him, but a free faculty of the mind and will.<sup>2</sup>

Even though Man is corrupt, thought Perkins, he has the possibility of doing good, but this possibility can never reach actuality until God acts upon him by His grace.<sup>3</sup> Quoting Augustine, Perkins concluded: "The Fathers in this sense say, To be able to haue faith is nature, to haue faith indeed is grace."<sup>4</sup>

The Roman Catholics agreed in a general way with his generic definition of free will, even though Bishop found fault which he himself admitted was insignificant. There were further agreements between the Protestants and the Romanists as to Man's estate (as he was created, corrupted, renewed, and will be glorified), the natural actions of Man since the Fall, the human responsibilities of Man regarding civil virtues, and Man's spiritual conduct both moral and religious.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 558.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop, William, A Reformation of a Catholike Deformed, (no pub., no pl., 1604), p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Infra*, p. 64.

<sup>4</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 729.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 558-559.

The main difference, according to William Perkins, is to be found in the cause of freedom of Man's will. He declared "that man's will worketh with grace in the first conuersion: yet not of it selfe, but by grace."<sup>1</sup> The will of Man is naturally passive, consequently Man cannot accept the gift of new life until his will is moved by God's grace to do so. "For as the conuersion is of God, so is the will to be conuerted."<sup>2</sup>

This notion is brought into sharper focus when the question is asked: What is Man unable to will being in the corrupted state? Perkins answered such a question by the establishing of the proposition: "Though liberty of nature remains, yet liberty of grace, that is to will well, is lost, extinguished, abolished by the fall of Adam."<sup>3</sup> This is proven:

Liberty of grace is founded in the goodnes of integritie of the wil: now this goodnes of the wil is abolished by the fall of Adam: and therefore the liberty it self that is founded thereon. That the goodnesse or integritie of the will is lost, I confirme it thus: That which wee put in our conuersion, we want by nature: we put on goodnesse in our conuersion. For in it we put on the new man created according to the image of God in iustice and holines. . . .<sup>4</sup>

Such reasoning is reiterated in another respect. He had mentioned that Man's will works by grace in bringing about his conversion. The regeneration relates not to the quality of the soul, but to its nature. In the Fall, Man's spirit was "turned

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 559.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 731.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 729.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 729-730.

to flesh, . . . and the natural disposition of the flesh is to lust against the spirit."<sup>1</sup> If the spirit is good, then the natural inclination of the flesh is toward evil. Man then, is completely corrupted. If Man is corrupted, his will is likewise corrupted and incapable of willing anything that is truly good. It follows that the liberty of grace to will the good is also lost.

Two corollaries are given to support this doctrine of the total corruption of Man. It is only God who can instill a new heart in Man, and this is only done by grace. Until he receives this new heart, Man cannot even have the freedom to will the good. Further, Man does not possess the ability to receive the gift of grace until that ability is implanted in him by God. Natural Man can then be described as completely lacking in ability even to think good thoughts or to do good deeds.<sup>2</sup> All that he can do is to sin. Any goodness to please God that Man may do is entirely the gift of God's grace. We are unable of ourselves to please God and to keep His commandments not because of our created will, but because of our corrupted will. The guilt lies in Man.

This doctrine is totally contrary to what the Church of Rome had taught and believed for decades. This Protestant doctrine was vigorously opposed by Cardinal Bellarmine who main-

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 730.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 730.

tained, "intelligi non potest quomodo ad opera pietatis actius voluntas humana concurrat, si non habeat ex se potentiam actiuam, saltem remotam."<sup>1</sup> Perkins had pictured the Roman position as Man possessing the ability to help himself toward his own conversion. William Bishop disagreed with this description of the Romanist belief about the will of Man. The seminary priest referred to the decision of the Council of Trent based upon the Thomist belief that no man can even prepare himself "to receiue the light of grace, but by the free and vnderuerued helpe of God, mouing him inward thereunto."<sup>2</sup> In contrast, however, to such a defence by Bishop are the thoughts of Thomas Aquinas,

that a man pressed with no temptation, may without faith by the special helpe of God, & without it, by his owne strength so doe that which is morally good, that no sin at all be committed therein.<sup>3</sup>

The Council of Trent had decided, in essence, that before one is justified, he is able partly of himself and partly aided, to do acts of moral goodness.<sup>4</sup> William Perkins leaped upon this statement of doctrinal belief, accusing the Church of Rome of reviving in part the Pelagian heresy, but camouflaging it. Roman Catholicism holds that Man is not dead as the Calvinists believe. He does have a capacity within himself to move, but only as he is

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 730, note. "It cannot be understood how the human will agrees in active works of piety, if it does not have of itself some living power, however far removed."

<sup>2</sup> Bishop, op. cit. p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 731.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 732.

moved to do so by God's grace. Natural Man is able even for a time to keep the whole Law by his own strength.<sup>1</sup> Besides, he can will his own salvation quickened by God's help. This was vigorously opposed by all the leaders of the Reformation.

The Cambridge thinker likened the Roman Catholic doctrine to the condition of a wounded man, or perhaps a prisoner, the manacles having been removed by the keeper. The prisoner is then enabled to place his hand in the hand of the keeper and is thereby helped to his feet. The Reformed position is likened to a dead man. Even though the fetters are removed, he is still unable even to stir. It is only when God places a new soul in Man by the spirit of grace that Man is enabled to stir and revive.

Bishop brought to the notice of the reader, two other points that he believed were omitted by Perkins in the discussion of free will. These were declared at the Council of Trent. First, we have the power to accept or to reject the spirit of grace when it is offered to us. Second, when we do accept the spirit of grace and work with it, we still have the power to refuse at any time to continue to do so.<sup>2</sup>

Perkins seemed to have met this problem in his argument. He expressed the belief that Scripture ascribes conversion and salvation wholly to God, quoting the Apostle Paul to support his

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 733. Cf. *ibid.*, I, pp. 613-615 for a discussion of Romanist ideas of repentance and conversion. Cf. also *ibid.*, I, pp 468-469; III, pp. 504-511 where the doctrines of will, salvation, and repentance have given way to the Romanist sacrament of penance.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop, op. cit., p. 19.

contention.<sup>1</sup> It is within Man to do good, but only when God has instilled the capacity to do so. Then it follows that Man is unable to will his own salvation or conversion except by a supernatural act within the framework of his soul. We are created anew for good works. To be sure, the will of Man has a work in doing that which is good, not by nature but by grace.<sup>2</sup>

Establishing the Reformed position as a great counteracting agent to the 'Pelagian' Romanism, he went a step further to describe the condition of Man in the estate of regeneration. It is the state "in which the will hath power to will, partly that which is good, and partly that which is euill, as daily experience declareth in the liues of iust men."<sup>3</sup> Man is able to do that which is good and that which is evil because of three liberties: the liberty of nature, the liberty of sin, and the liberty of grace. The liberty of grace permits Man to do what pleases God, because the liberty of sin is diminished.

In the process of regeneration, Man's will is passive as God works His grace. The fact that Man thinks, wills, and desires the good is evidence of God's action upon Man's passive and active will.<sup>4</sup> In the same sense, Man's will cooperates with God's grace. It must be clear that in regeneration we are not co-workers with God,<sup>5</sup> but passive patients.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 560. Eph. 2.10; 4.24; Phil. 2.12,13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 734.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 736.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 736. The passive will precedes the active.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, p. 736.

## B. Regeneration and Original Sin

The question of the potency of Original Sin, particularly after Christian baptism, has a direct bearing on the relationship of a man to God after the process of regeneration. There is general agreement that after baptism, the natural corruption is abolished.

The difference between the Roman Church and the Church of England in this matter rests not in substance, but in degree. Perkins portrayed the Romanists as being persuaded that Original Sin is completely abolished in baptism, and that it is no longer sin in the original or real sense.<sup>1</sup> It takes on the complexion of a flaw in Man's nature, making it impossible to commit sin, "much like tinder, which though it be not fire of it selfe, yet is it very apt and fitte to conceiue fire."<sup>2</sup> Since Man is not burdened by Original Sin, it is possible for him to obey God's Law fully, as well as do good works that are without sin. These good works, then, become the means of salvation and the subject of God's judgment.

William Perkins stipulated in opposition that Original Sin remains with us, even after baptism, not as a defect, but as contamination. It is still sin proper. This concept is supported

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 259; hence the Roman Catholic doctrine of perfection in this life. Cf. ibid., I, pp. 598-599.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 561. Cf. ibid., III, p. 495. ". . . they teach that men are not wholly dead in sinne, but in part, or halfe dead, yea, that being a little holpen, they can keepe the law: as though by sinne men had not been wholly deprived of the glorie of God."

by four reasons: first, St. Paul indicated, "It is no more I that doe it, but sinne that dwelleth in me."<sup>1</sup> The Romanists interpreted this as not condition, but act.<sup>2</sup> The Cambridge thinker ardently maintained that it is Original Sin, and used the following reasoning to support his claim.

That which once was sinne properly, and still remaining in man maketh him to sinne, and intangleth him in the punishment of sinne, and makes him miserable;<sup>3</sup> that is sinne properly. But originall sinne doth all these.

Second, "death is the wages of sinne, as the Apostle saith."<sup>4</sup>

Infants that are baptized and regenerated, who die before the years of discretion, still possess the Original Sin, death itself being the proof. Third, the very lusting which causes one to commit sin is in actuality sin, because it is lust against the spirit instilled in Man by God in regeneration. Fourth, the ancient Church supports the Reformed doctrine, particularly in the words of St. Augustine,

. . . there is no iust man vpon earth that doth good and sinneth not: by which fault none liuing shall be iustified in the sight of God. For which fault, if we say wee haue no sinne, there is no truth in vs: for which also, though we profit neuer so much, it is necessarie for vs to say, forgiue vs our debts, though all our words, deedes, and thoughts bee already forgiuen in baptisme.<sup>5</sup>

Bishop admitted that the last reason is a strong argument

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 561. Romans 7.17.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Bishop, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 561.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 561. Romans 6.23. Cf. ibid., I, p. 397.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, p. 562.



in Perkins' favor. He, in turn, searched out a similar sentence from St. Augustine, and coupled it with words from the other early Church fathers to support the Papists claim, thereby indicating the importance of tradition in the discussion.<sup>1</sup>

### C. Beliefs on the Certainty of Salvation

Another difference of conviction is found in the Roman Catholic and the Protestant views of the certainty of salvation. Here, too, differences are not to be found in the definition, but in the manner of assurance. The two positions coincide as to the knowledge of the certainty of salvation. The Papists, however, added that such assurance can only be had by hope. Perkins' belief was that such assurance can be known in the conscience "by ordinary and special faith."<sup>2</sup> Still further, he attested that certainty by true faith is infallible. The Romanists expressed belief that certainty is only probable.

In another case, both said that Man is saved by Christ through God's mercy. There is a difference even here. The Reformer's confidence "commeth from certen and ordinarie faith;" while the Papists came "from hope, ministring (as they say) but a coniecturall certentie."<sup>3</sup>

William Perkins continued to lament the difference of opinion. He was convinced that it was needless. Rather than look upon Man's unworthiness as his opponents did, he appealed for

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 563.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 563.

faith in God's promise of salvation. If one expresses his love to God by faith, and having the true hope of salvation through Jesus Christ, he is in Christ.

And he that is in Christ hath all his vnworthinesse and wants laid on Christ, and they are couered and pardoned in his death; . . . wee haue no cause to wauer, but to be certaine of our saluation, . . .<sup>1</sup>

This thought is based on the belief that God elects those whom He would have. Hence, the one chosen receives the promise of salvation.

The Protestant belief in assurance seemed to have been a stumbling block to William Bishop, who wondered how one might know whether he is elected.<sup>2</sup> This was anticipated by Perkins, for he expressed the opinion that when one is confronted with the Gospel, he responds in faith and repentance. The elect have the spirit of grace and of prayer.<sup>3</sup> Yet, Bishop protested, "no man can assure himselfe by faith of his saluation, because there is no word of God that warranteth him so to doe."<sup>4</sup> The Cambridge Reformer met this problem by agreeing that in Scripture the promises of salvation are indefinitely set forth. There is no place where it is written, "If Iohn will beleue, he shall be saued; . . ."<sup>5</sup> The minister of the Gospel takes

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 567.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 563.

<sup>4</sup> Bishop, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>5</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 563.

these promises and lays them to the heart of each man. People then respond by faith through the spirit of grace implanted by Christ.

This question could follow: What part do the elect play in salvation? Perkins indicated that the elect have need to ask forgiveness for their sins daily, through prayer. Both he and William Bishop were agreed on the essential of seeking forgiveness. Bishop, however, still doubted the stability of the position held by the Cambridge theologian. Such doubt led him to pose the question: Why ask forgiveness if we already have assurance of pardon?<sup>1</sup> Again, William Perkins expected such a question. Accordingly, he proclaimed that our assurance is weak and small, and as we pray and seek forgiveness for our present and future sins, we thereby grow in grace in Christ.<sup>2</sup>

#### D. JUSTIFICATION

The central point of the disagreement between this Reformer and the Church of Rome is to be found in the doctrine of justification of a sinner. The Reformed position described by Perkins is supported by the following four rules: that justification is an act of God whereby He gives absolution to the sinner, and accepts the sinner to eternal life by the righteousness and merits of Jesus Christ; that justification consists in forgiveness of sins through Christ's death, and the imputation of Christ's jus-

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 564.

tice; that justification is an act of God's mercy and grace through the merits of Jesus Christ; and that Man can only be justified by faith.<sup>1</sup>

William Perkins stated the beliefs of the Church of Rome.

Before iustification there goes a preparation thereunto: which is an action wrought partly by the holy Ghost, and partly by the power of naturall freewill, whereby a<sup>2</sup> man disposeth himselfe to his own future iustification.

The basis or preparation for justification, according to the Romanist, is faith, a general knowledge whereby one understands and gives assent that the doctrine of the Word of God is true. A sight of one's sins, a fear of Hell, hope of salvation, love of God, repentance, and other comparable spiritual acts emerge from such a faith. When men have fully attained this preparation, "they are then fully disposed, (as they say) to their iustification."<sup>3</sup>

Following this preparation is the justification, the act of God whereby He makes a man righteous. It consists of two parts: when an evil man is made a good man (this first justification comes only from God's mercy through the merits of Jesus Christ); and when a good or just man is made better. One who is made righteous by the first act of justification can bring

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 567. Cf. ibid., II, p. 204. "Iustification is . . . a certaine action of God applied vnto vs, or a certaine respect or relation, whereby we are acquit of our sinnes, and accepted to life euerlasting."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 567.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 567.

forth good works and make himself more just and righteous.

These two divergent positions were most clearly portrayed in Perkins' question: "What is the very thing, that causeth a man to stand righteous before God, and to be accepted to life everlasting?"<sup>1</sup> His immediate answer was, "Nothing but the righteousness of Christ, which consisteth partly in his sufferings, & partly in his active obedience in fulfilling the rigour of the law."<sup>2</sup>

General agreement was displayed by the Romanists in such an answer. The Church of Rome granted that in justification, sin is forgiven by the merits of Christ, and that no one is justified without such forgiveness of sin. They also agreed that the righteousness whereby a man is justified before God comes only from Christ. Having reference to Bellarmine, Perkins attested of the Romanists:

The most learned among them say, that Christ his satisfaction and the merit of his death is imputed to every sinner that doth beleag, for his satisfaction before God: and hitherto we agree.<sup>3</sup>

Such a description of the Roman Catholic doctrine of justification appeared repugnant and unjust in Bishop's understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 567.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 567.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 567-568. Cf. Bellarmine, Robertus, Quarti Tomi Tertiae Controversiae Generalis, De Iustificatione. Lib. III, cap. VII, pp. 2257-2258 ff. ". . . misericordia Dei imputat homini credenti iustitiam Christi, ad iustitiam & beatitudinem." "God's mercy imputes Christ's righteousness to the believing man, for justice and happiness."

In reference to preparation for justification, William Bishop quoted the conclusion of the Council of Trent, so that there would be no misunderstanding of the Romanist position.

Men are prepared and disposed to this iustice when being stirred vp, and helped by God's grace, they conceiuing faith by hearing, are freely moued towards God, beleeuing those thinges to be true, which God doth reueale and promise, namely, that he of his grace doth iustifie a sinner through the redemption, that is in CHRIST IESVS. And when knowledging themselves to consider the mercie of God, are lifted vp into hope, trusting that God will be mercifull vnto them for Christs sake: and beginning to loue him as the fountayne of all iustice, are there by moued with hatred and detestation of all sinnes. Finally they determine to receiue baptisme, to beginne a new life, and to keepe all Christs commaundements.<sup>1</sup>

The Council of Trent also recorded that the cause of justification is the glory of God, the glory of Christ, and Man's justification. That is, God is the moving cause through the merit of Christ's passion. The instrument is the Sacrament of Baptism. Justification is carried out through "the onlie formall cause, . . . inherent iustice, that is, Faith, Hope, and Charity, with the other giftes of the Holy Ghost, powred into a mans soule, at that instant of iustification."<sup>2</sup>

So, averred William Bishop, there is agreement that justification comes by the free grace of God through His infinite mercy and the merits of Christ's passion, and that all one's sins are forgiven when he is justified.

Disparities appeared between the Reformed and Romanist pos-

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop, op. cit., pp. 48-49. Cf. Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 612.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop, op. cit., p. 49.

itions in the application of justification. The satisfaction by the death of Christ and His obedience to the Law is imputed to us and hence becomes our righteousness, Perkins stated.<sup>1</sup> The forgiveness of sins is the factor which makes one righteous and causes him to be accepted to life eternal. Coupled with the forgiveness of sins is the practice of good works, or the out-living of the indwelling spirit of love.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the Romanists said that it is by one's satisfaction, not by one's righteousness that he stands righteous before God.

William Perkins agreed that 'the habite of righteousness' or the practice of righteousness, which is termed sanctification, is a necessity. He could not affirm that it is the means by which a sinner becomes righteous before God. Sanctification serves primarily to confirm that a sinner has been reconciled to God. Belief in this doctrine is based on five reasons. First, the Law demands absolute righteousness, but we fail to keep the Law because of our unrighteousness. Only Christ's righteousness can satisfy the justice of the Law. Second, as Christ was made sin for us by imputation, so are we made righteous by the imputation of Christ's righteousness.<sup>3</sup> Third, as Man was made sinner by imputation, as well as by nature through

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 568.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ibid., III, p. 176. The Romanist practice of righteousness is contrasted by Perkins' piety, "To studie and practise innocencie, and the maintaining of peace in Christian estates:"

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 612-613.

the first Adam's disobedience, so by the second Adam's obedience we are made righteous. Fourth, God accepts any satisfaction made for the lack of justice in us as the justice demanded by the Law. Christ was satisfaction for the Law, therefore this satisfaction is our justice. The Romanists make Man's obedience the satisfaction, believing that since satisfaction and justice are equal,<sup>1</sup> the obedience is made the justice and satisfaction.<sup>2</sup> Fifth, not only has this Reformed doctrine been affirmed in Scripture, but it was also the belief of the ancient Church.<sup>3</sup>

Perkins' opponent, William Bishop, found the Reformed doctrine of imputed justice to be obnoxious. He protested,

Againe, they doe great iniury to Gods goodnes, wisdom, and justice in their justification, for they teach, that inward justice, or sanctification, is not necessary to justification. . . . Wherein first they make their righteous man, Like . . . to sepulchers whited on the out side, with an imputed justice, but within, full of iniquity, and disorder. Then the wisdom of God must either not discover this masse of iniquity, or his goodnesse abide it, or his justice either wipe it away, or punish it. . . . And why doth he not for Christes sake deface it, and wipe it cleane away, and adorne with his grace that soule, whom he for his sonnes sake loueth, and make it worthy of his loue and kingdome.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 493. Perkins was convinced that if Man can of himself satisfy God's justice, it causes that justice to be imperfect, thereby robbing God of His perfection.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 568. Cf. Bishop, op. cit., p. 53. Bishop asserted that Perkins cited Bellarmine, De Iustificatione, op. cit., Lib. III, cap. VII, as authority for this statement. Cf. also supra, p. 72, note. Bishop was correct in saying that Bellarmine did not use the term 'satisfaction' in chapter 7. Perkins probably believed that it was inferred.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 569. Perkins quoted liberally from the writings of Bernard and Augustine.

<sup>4</sup> Bishop, op. cit., pp. 49-50.



Though both the Protestant and the Romanist were agreed that justification is by faith, it is agreement only superficially. There were great differences in the underlying understanding of the common term.<sup>1</sup> The Romanists inferred that one is justified by a general faith or intellectual assent that the articles of religion are true.<sup>2</sup> The Protestant, in comparison, held that justifying faith is a particular faith whereby the believer gives spiritual affirmation to the promises of righteousness and everlasting life through Jesus Christ.

He substantiated the Protestant position with three reasons. First, the "faith whereby we live, is that faith whereby we are justified: but the faith whereby we live spiritually, is a particular faith whereby we apply Christ vnto ourselves, . . ."<sup>3</sup> Second, we must believe that our prayers will be answered. Therefore, we are to ask forgiveness of our sins, that the merits of Christ's righteousness may be applied to us. This truth must be believed. By this description, it is clear that justifying faith demands knowledge revealed in the Word of God regarding salvation, and also the applying of salvation to our lives. He accused the Roman Catholic Church of failure to apply the knowledge of salvation to the individual believer. Third, the ancient Church affirmed the Protestant position.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 570.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ibid., II, p. 204; ibid., III, p. 229, Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 570. Cf. ibid., II, p. 209 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 570. Augustine, Bernard, and Cyprian were called as 'witnesses to support the Reformed position.

The Romanists acquiesced in the belief that

We are iustified by faith, because it disposeth a sinner to his iustification after this maner: By faith (saith he) the minde of man is inlightened in the knowledge of the law and the Gospell: knowledge stirres vp a feare of hel with a consideration of the promise of happinesse, as also the loue and feare of God, and the hope of life eternall.<sup>1</sup>

By this preparation, God is enabled to "infuse the habit of charity and other vartues,"<sup>2</sup> by which we are justified before Him.

This was obnoxious to William Perkins, because the Roman doctrine placed the faith that justifies over justification itself by sequence of their nature, as well as by time. Scripture, on the other hand, emphatically expresses that at the instant of belief, one is justified and sanctified. Equally odious was the Romanist belief that faith is little more than an 'illumination of the mind' which stirs up the will. The illumination being 'mooued and helped' causes "many spiritual motions in the heart,"<sup>3</sup> and thereby prepares for the future justification.

Further, Roman doctrine teaches that Man is justified by faith, but not by faith alone. Other virtues as hope, love, fear of God, etc. have their influence.<sup>4</sup> On the contrary, the Cambridge thinker briskly adhered to the established Protestant belief that justification is by faith, and faith alone. There

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 570.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 570.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 571.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 571. Perkins listed five reasons supporting the doctrine of the Church of Rome.

is nothing in Man's nature or acts that can lend to justification before God. The virtues listed by the Roman Church are a consequence of faith and are necessary to salvation as signs.<sup>1</sup>

Such Romanist beliefs as the absolute fulfillment of the Law following justification, that a man may be without sin for a time, that the works of a regenerate man are perfect and may be looked on by God with favor, or that one may do more than the Law requires were termed 'blasphemy'.<sup>2</sup> These doctrines were essential to Romanism, because of the conviction that there is a double degree of fulfillment of God's Law. The first relates to this life. We are to truly love God above the creation, and also our neighbor as ourselves. The second relates to fulfilling the Law in the life to come. That is, we are to love God with all the power in our capacity.

The obedience that relates to the Law according to the Romanists, also relates to the Gospel. It was maintained by them that the Law and the Gospel "are the same in substance: . . ."<sup>3</sup> This conception clouded their understanding of what Perkins meant by the Law and the Gospel.<sup>4</sup>

Another main difference concerning the doctrine of justification involved good works and their value. The Romanists

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 572. The author listed four reasons which included Scripture, reason, and the Church fathers.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 34, Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>4</sup> Infra, p. 117 f. for a fuller understanding of Perkins' thoughts on the Law and the Gospel.

claimed that two justifications are necessary.<sup>1</sup> In the second, that of making a just man more just, they maintained "that good works are meritorious causes of the second iustification, which they terme Actuall. Also that good works are means to increase the first iustification, which they call Habituell."<sup>2</sup>

William Perkins did not dispute the value of good works. He staunchly maintained that good works can only be done by the justified with the sole purpose of pleasing God. Good works are not the cause of salvation, but a consequence of saving faith. They are necessary as marking stones directing us along the pathway to life eternal.

However, the Protestant did believe that in some way the righteous man is justified by works.<sup>3</sup> Lest there be misunderstanding, let it be remembered that Perkins disputed the Romanist doctrine that Man's good works are efficacious to his justification. He inferred from the Letter of the Apostle James, that the good works of Abraham were principally signs or results of his being justified before God. Likewise, it is true with the present day believer. The subtle difference is more clearly comprehended through his reasoning in two supporting points.

Election to saluation is of grace without workes; therefore the iustification of a sinner is of grace alone without workes. For it is a certaine rule, that the cause of a cause is the cause of a thing caused. Now grace without workes is the cause of election, which election is the cause of our iustif-

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 572.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 572. Cf. St. James 2.21.

location: and therefore grace without workes is the cause of iustification.<sup>1</sup>

A man must be justified fully before he can produce any good work, for he must be pleasing to God before his work can be accepted. It was Abraham's obedience that produced the good works. The justifying act in that particular case was the obedience of the patriarch.<sup>2</sup>

William Bishop, using the Scriptures and the writings of the ancient Church Fathers principally St. Augustine, attacked his rival, William Perkins. He tried to reduce the Reformed position to absurdity, particularly the relation of good works to salvation. If it is granted by the Reformed belief that Man is able to do good works after his salvation and justification, and if Man nevertheless is still sinful, it follows, asserted Bishop, that no good work can be done since it is infected with sin. Thus, the believer is threatened with damnation. Therefore,

No mortall sinne is to be donne vnder paine of damnation: for the wages of sinne is death: but all good works are stayned with mortall sinne. ergo no good worke is to be done vnder paine of damnation.

In the second place, William Perkins believed that every man is bound by sin. Bishop took this concept and attempted

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 573.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 573. Perkins supported his contention by two Pauline Scripture passages, Romans 3.28, and Galatians 5.3.

<sup>3</sup> Bishop, op. cit., p. 82. Cf. Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 574. Perkins discussed the two positions regarding Merit and its relation to salvation. Cf. also ibid., I, p. 187, on the treasury of merit.

to reduce it to absurdity by saying that men are bound to keep the first and second tables of the Law. However, this cannot be done since Man is bound by sin; and since the wages of sin is death, every man will be damned.<sup>1</sup> William Bishop attacked the other main ideas of Perkins' doctrine, particularly the Scripture passages used as proof. The totality of disagreement rested in the fact that each interpreted the various passages according to the precepts of his own Church. Bishop made better use of his quotations from the Church Fathers, and Perkins displayed better use of Scripture. The Cambridge theologian possessed a much firmer comprehension of the Roman Catholic doctrine than his opponent did of the Calvinist belief.<sup>2</sup> The dominance of Perkins as a polemist is noticeable even though opportunity was never given him for rebuttal to Bishop's charges.

## II. PRACTICAL DIFFERENCES

Perkins made no artificial division between the theological and the practical aspects of his dispute with the Roman Catholic Church. However, to clearly understand the mind of this man, such a division is desirable for this study.

Like the other Puritans, he desired clarification of the term 'Catholic'. He felt entitled to use the term and therefore employed it after defining the correct historical meaning of the word. He believed that he had every right to classify

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop, op. cit., p. 82. Cf. Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 236 ff. Bishop could hardly have understood Perkins' doctrine relating to the Law and the Gospel.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 545.

himself as part of the Catholic Church, corroborating this belief by adding,

The Catholike Church, our Mother, is to be sought for, and to be found in the true visible churches, the certen markes whereof are three. The preaching of the word of God, out of the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, with obedience. . . . True innuocation of God the Father, in the only name of Christ by the assistance of the Spirit, . . . the right vse of the sacraments, baptisme, and the Lords supper, . . . And by these shall wee finde the true Church of God in England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, France, &c.<sup>1</sup>

Though such clarification was necessary, Perkins was led to deeper issues respecting the relationship of the Roman Church and its adherents with the Reformed Protestant doctrine and its corresponding believers.

#### A. Idolatry

Perhaps more than anything else including doctrine, the presence of idolatry in the Roman Catholic practice did more to widen the chasm between the Reformed and Roman sectaries. If an accusation of idolatry be proven, and Perkins made a bold attempt to do so, then he was correct in saying that he was a minister of the true, the holy Catholic Church. The Church of Rome on the contrary was only an idolatrous scheme.

Likewise the religion of the Papist teacheth & maintaineth the worship of false gods. For it giues to Angels and Saints a faculty or power to know the desires of our hearts, to heare, and help vs in all places, at al times: and hereupon praier is made to them: but al this is indeed the prerogatiue and priuiledge of the true God: and in as much as it is giuen to Angels and Saints departed, they are set vp in the roome of the true God.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 302.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 281.

If God can only be worshiped before figures or images, then there is a basic difference in the concept of God. Perkins believed in a God who is immanent as well as transcendent, who can be approached directly through Christ Jesus, His Son, and not by saints and images. The Romanist belief made God purely transcendent. This charge seemed true even though the Romanists maintained that God was also present at the figure of worship, hearing and helping the worshiper.

This God was not the God that Perkins worshiped and trusted, because,

. . . this God is a God deuised by the braine of man. . . . the true God hath reuealed his will, that hee doth detest this manner of worship: and therefore the true worship is directed eyther to the Images themselves, or to the God deuised in the braine.<sup>1</sup>

The ever-present Jehovah was as assuring to William Perkins as He was to Moses. Though he experienced no 'burning bush', he experienced the Living God, and sought every way in which to carry out God's commandments. God was so holy and righteous that He could not be worshiped by and through images. It was against His very nature. The Scriptures were called upon to prove this conviction. The second commandment is a precise warning to Israel prohibiting the people from indulging in image worship of God. From the words of Moses, he framed his reasoning, "If yee saw no image (namely of God), yee shall make none. But ye saw no image, onely heard a voice: Therefore ye shall make no image

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 281.



of God."<sup>1</sup> Not only was this argument used against the Israelites, but it was used as a bludgeon against Romanism and any individual who bowed to idols in the worship of God.

Coupled with the use of images, are the other practices of the Romanists which Perkins believed the second commandment condemned.

Hitherto may we adde popish superstitions in sacrifices, meates, holidais, apparell, temporarie and bead-ridden prayers, indulgences, austere life, whipping, ceremonies, gestures, gate, conuersation, pilgrimage, building of altars, pictures, Churches, and all other of that rabble.<sup>2</sup>

This can be expanded beyond the Church of Rome, and perhaps was a gentle hint to his fellow clergymen in the Church of England who may have been tending toward a compromise with the Roman practices. He added, "To these may be added consort in musioke in divine seruice, feeding the eares, not edifying the minde."<sup>3</sup>

By far the greatest abuse as to idolatry was found in the statuary erected to Jesus Christ. How repulsive this was to William Perkins! He saw no objection to having an image or picture of Christ provided it was of Him as a Man, and that it was not used in worship.<sup>4</sup> When it is made to represent the three-fold office of Christ, Prophet, Priest, and King, "or if it be vsed as an instrument or signe in which, & before which, men worship Christ himselfe, it is . . . a flat Idol."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 35. Deuteronomy 4.15,16.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 38.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 675.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, p. 675.

There was agreement between the Roman Church and the Cambridge Reformer in respect to the unity of the Godhead, the Trinity of Persons, the distinctions of Christ's nature, the personal union, and His office as Mediator. The deed, however, counteracted the word of the Romanists. They confessed Christ as Lord, "but with this condition, that the Seruant of Seruants may alter and change his precepts, whose power (they say) is of that greatnesse, that he may be iudged of none, and that he can open or shutte heauen to whom he please."<sup>1</sup> The Romanists confessed Him as Savior, "yet a Saviour in us, in that he giues vs this grace, that by our owne merits we may be our owne Saulours; borrowing also (if neede be) a supply from Martyrs and the rest of the Saints."<sup>2</sup> They agreed that Christ was crucified, dead, and buried for us, but that once the believer is pardoned, he must of himself satisfy some part of the punishment either here and now or in the Purgatory to come.<sup>3</sup> The Roman doctrine maintained that Christ is at the right hand of God as Intercessor for the believer. Yet, the Virgin Mary has precedence over the Son of God, for she, according to the Roman belief, has authority to command and control her Son.<sup>4</sup>

For this cause we reiect this religion, because it turnes our onely and perfect Redeemer into a fained Christ of mans deuising. It may be further said, that some false opinions conceiued of Christ, doe not straightway turne him into an

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 674.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 674.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ibid., III, p. 50, Sermon in the Mount. Cf. ibid., I, p. 607 for the Protestant answer to the Romanist Purgatory.

<sup>4</sup> Infra, p. 89. Perkins gave Jesus Christ His rightful place.

Idoll. I answer with Hierome: Euen this day an Idoll is set up in the house of God, or in the hearts and soules of beleeuers, when a new doctrine is deuised. Againe, a false opinion, is an Idoll of falsehood.<sup>1</sup>

This Christ of Roman Catholicism was paralleled by worship of the Crucifix. In fact, indicated Perkins, "the principall ring-leaders teach and defend, that Roodes or Crucifixes, and other Images of God, are to be worshipped with the very same worshippe wherewith Christ himselfe is worshipped."<sup>2</sup> This makes gods out of the crucifixes, "for it abuseth that, which is the greatest treasure in the world, namely Christ crucified."<sup>2</sup>

Another facet of Romanism was the presence of Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. It seemed irreconcilable that a Christ who sits at the right hand of God in Heaven could permit Himself to be placed in the hands of every priest after the words of consecration.<sup>4</sup> This is not to say that Christ cannot be present in the service of commemoration and communion,<sup>5</sup> when He said, 'This do in remembrance of Me'. William Perkins never for one moment believed that Christ divorces Himself from the conduct of His Church. What he did find objectionable was that "the Romane Church adoreth Christ, in, at, and before a peece of bread in the Eucharist, and it teacheth men to doe so."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 674.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 684.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 216.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 281.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 589-590.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., I, p. 677. Cf. ibid., II, p. 331.

It is idolatry to direct adoration to a piece of bread. There is no commandment to God to support a practice of adoring the bread, its form, or the place of consecration. Therefore, Perkins warned that it is idolatrous to bind adoration to any particular place or thing. Using Scripture, he attempted to show that in worship of Christ in the New Testament, spiritual adoration was the only thing required.<sup>1</sup> There is no such thing as Christ being bodily present, "hid vnder the forme of bread: not Christ which is now corporally in heauen, but a meere fiction of the braine of man is worshipped."<sup>2</sup>

Even though the passion and death of Christ were for men's pardon, the Romanists expressed belief that Man must make satisfaction for his sins.<sup>3</sup> The conclusion of St. Paul was, that to trust in anything but the merits of Christ for salvation and justification wholly or in part is to serve idols.<sup>4</sup>

The doctrine then of Iustification by workes, is a doctrine that maintaines idolatry; for if they iustifie, we may put our trust in them: and if we put our confidence in them, we make idols of them. That workes may merit at Gods hand, they must not only be sanctified, but also deified.<sup>5</sup>

With the distortion of Christ's purpose and office, there was also the elevation of the Virgin Mary to a position above

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 677. "This Christ himselfe teacheth, Ioh. 4.21,22. The houre commeth, and now is, when ye shal worship neither at Ierusalem, nor in this mountaine: . . ."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 677. Cf. ibid., I, p. 680.

<sup>3</sup> Supra, pp. 73-74.

<sup>4</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 285.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., II, p. 285.

Jesus Christ in Heaven to become a goddess, as Perkins expressed it. He bitterly lamented,

. . . for they call her the queene of heauen, the queene of the world: our Ladie: the mother of grace and mercie. Shee is esteemed as an vniversall aduocate to the whole world, and there be other mediatours vnto her, as to a queene: there be eight solemne feasts for the honour and inuocation of her: besides this, there is no day passeth in which she is not inuocated in hymnes or in the masse. And they ascribe to her, power to commaund and controll her sonne in heauen, saying, Aske the Father: commaund the Sonne, and commaund him by the authoritie of a mother: againe, cause him to receiue our prayers. This is to make her not onely a goddesse, but also to place her aboue God himselfe.<sup>1</sup>

Reference has been made to the worship of angels and saints.<sup>2</sup> These are honored by both Protestant and Roman Catholic in three manners: by keeping them in mind in a Godly way; by giving thanks to God for them, and the benefits He has given to His Church by them; and honoring them by practicing their faith, humility, meekness, repentance, their fear of God, and the virtues in which they excelled.<sup>3</sup>

There is also the possibility that some of the prophets, apostles, and martyrs left behind some 'reliques'. If these can be proven to belong to a true saint, William Perkins believed they should be kept with reverence as monuments if this can be done without giving offence to true believers. However, to worship the saints or angels or their reliques is most objectionable, for worship through invocation or adoration belongs

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 678. He discussed extensively the Roman Catholic practices in worship of the Virgin Mary.

<sup>2</sup> Supra, p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 601.

only to God. It is sufficient to remember the saints for what they were, but to give civil or religious worship to them is not in God's plan or commandment.

He denounced the soliciting the intercession of saints as the Virgin Mary, Paul, and others before God for us. Never in Scripture was such solicitation practiced. Furthermore,

No creature, Saint, or Angel, can bee a Mediatour for vs to God, sauing Christ alone, who is indeede the onely Advocate of his Church. . . . The virgin Marie and the rest of the Saints beeing sinners, could not satisfie so much as for themselves.<sup>1</sup>

These, then, are false gods and are of Satan rather than of God.

Another false god described by William Perkins is the Bishop of Rome. Though he is not called 'god', yet he is made one since he takes the titles of God, and permits himself to be termed 'god' in the canon law. This was true not only of the early copies of the canon law, but was also contemporary with Perkins' day. Furthermore, the Pope claims unlimited power, and even usurps power over earthly monarchs, claiming to be Christ's deputy for the government of the universal Church. He claims sovereign judgment over all people and causes, yet no man can judge him. Also, he claims absolute power in the dispensing of the Laws of God.<sup>2</sup> Perkins finally termed the Pope as the Anti-christ,<sup>3</sup> and concluded:

And therefore we may iustly suspect the reuelation and miracles pretended by the Romane Church. And the speaking, weeping, and bleeding of Images, and the bleeding of the

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, pp. 603-604. Cf. ibid., III, pp. 297-299.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 679; ibid., III, pp. 209, 493.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 31.

Eucharist, what are they else but Satanicall illusions.<sup>1</sup>

It must not be imagined that William Perkins was to be counted with those who were desirous of destroying the aids to worship. Instead, it must be understood that he was among those who sought the true worship of God. He was not interested in abolishing the aesthetical appreciation in the everyday experiences of his hearers and readers, or even the aesthetic spirit in worship. Art (he referred to painting and engraving particularly) is the ordinance of God, and to be a skilled artist is a gift of God.<sup>2</sup> It follows, then, that artistry can be used without creating images for Man's worship, and giving offence to God. He was of the conviction that even the history found in Scripture could be painted, but he issued a solemn warning against permitting the painting in a place of worship lest it tend to idolatry. It is permissible in Bibles provided no images of God are described. Symbols for God are perfectly permissible, however. He was convinced that it would be a grave mistake to lose Christian symbolism.<sup>3</sup> Also permissible is the use of images as decorative pieces to adorn public buildings. One cannot object to the presence of a head of a ruler or prince on coins. Also, images erected in memory of deceased friends that are revered is an acceptable practice.<sup>4</sup> Protestants were warned to flee from Roman Catholic idolatry lest they be

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 688.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 587.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 587.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 675.

infected by its contagion. Not only must they flee from idols, but they "must auoid the making of them, the hauing of them, the vsing of them, and the vsers of them."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the true Christian is not even permitted to attend a Roman Catholic Mass, or to attend any service where God is not given His due place.<sup>2</sup>

So it is established that the true believers must beware the Romanist creed which worships a god set up by themselves, a god that can be appeased by human satisfactions, a god "at whose hands a sinfull man may merite euerlasting life, that is to say, a God of all mercy, and little or no iustice."<sup>3</sup>

#### B. Tradition

Both Protestantism and Roman Catholicism rely in degree on tradition. "Traditions, are doctrines deliuered from hand to hand, either by word of mouth, or by writing, beside the written word of God."<sup>4</sup> Both Protestants and Romanists believe that the very Word of God was delivered by tradition. For example, "God reuealed his will to Adam by word of mouth: and renewed the same vnto the Patriarokes, not by writing but by speeche, by dreams, and other inspirations . . ."<sup>5</sup>

Neither theologian disputed that the prophets of the Old Testament spoke and did many things that were worthwhile and

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 685; ibid., I, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 87; ibid., I, p. 219.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 281; ibid., II, p. 87.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 580.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, p. 580.



are not recorded in Scripture. The same is true of Jesus and His apostles. These factors came to us or our forefathers primarily through tradition. "And many things we hold for truth, not written in the word, if they be not against the word."<sup>1</sup>

Also, neither Protestant nor Romanist disputed that the Church possesses power to prescribe "ordinances, rules, or traditions, touching time and place of God worship, and touching order and comelinesse to be vsed in the same: . ." <sup>2</sup> That is, the Church must weigh tradition in the light of the conditions of the day as well as Scripture, making certain of the proper use. Traditions must definitely not give way to superstition, but be firmly grounded in God's Word.<sup>3</sup>

Besides the written tradition found in the Word of God, which William Perkins held to be sufficient for salvation, the Romanists added certain unwritten traditions which they indicated must be believed as profitable and of necessity for salvation. These are of two types: "Apostolicall, namely, such as were deliuered by the Apostles, and not written: and Ecclesiasticall, which the Church decreeth as occasion offered."<sup>4</sup> Protestants could hardly accept the Romanist belief in this,

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 580.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 581.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 51. Perkins indicated that even the traditions held to be of value by the Romanists are useless unless they can be substantiated in God's Word.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 580.

especially since the Scriptures are sufficient for faith and doctrine. They refused to acknowledge traditions additional to the sufficiency of the Word of God.

There are many traditions which the Church of Rome does not follow, principally those called by the early Church Fathers, 'Apostolic'. There were many practices of the Fathers that have been rejected by the Church. "Therefore the present Church of Rome can shew no consent of the Catholike Doctors from those unwritten Traditions, which it hath set downe as necessary to saluation."<sup>1</sup>

Basic to all other Romanist traditions is the belief in the supremacy of Peter and his successors in Rome. Using the example of the Apostle Paul and his conference with the leaders of the Church, the Church of Rome branded those to be heretics who did not go to Rome "to have their doctrine and religion tried and examined."<sup>2</sup> Perkins was convinced that it was better to have his beliefs tried by the writings of "Peter, James, Iohn, Paul, &c."<sup>3</sup> In fact, he believed there was a commandment not to go to Rome for this purpose. Echoing again the Scripture of separation, he reminded his readers, "Come out

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 512.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 189. Cf. ibid., III, p. 545. The Roman Church has "... denounced the sentence of excommunication against our Churches, and condemned the Protestants for heretikes, when most of them neuer knew our doctrine, nor euer heard what we could say for ourselues: . . ."

of Babylon my people."<sup>1</sup>

Apostolic succession has always been a grave question within the orbit of the Christian Church, separating many who are agreed otherwise on the principal doctrines of Christian belief. Perkins abhorred the doctrine, and was presumably repudiated by some of his brethren in the ministry for his conviction. Particularly was he vociferous in the application of the doctrine to the Church of Rome. He agreed that the Bishop of Rome was Peter's successor, "not in teaching, but in denying Christ."<sup>2</sup> Even the Romanists of his day agreed that the doctrine is based upon human history with the exercise of human faith. Then again, to be in succession is no sign that one's faith or office is infallible unless it be a faith like that of the prophets and apostles. This is difficult to prove, argued Perkins.

. . . Caiaphas held his office by succession from Aaron: and yet in public assembly condemned the Messiah spoken of by Moses and the Prophets. Therefore the succession of bishops of Rome from Peter is of no moment, vnlesse they can prooue their religion is the religion of Peter, which they can neuer doe.<sup>3</sup>

Another belief which stirred the Cambridge Reformer to bitter remonstrance was the Romanist doctrine of Papal supremacy and infallibility.<sup>4</sup> He contended that neither Peter nor the Bishops of Rome have any supremacy over the Catholic Church.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 189. Revelation 18.4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 189.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 204.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 204.

The only supremacy that really exists is beyond the sphere of the Roman hierarchy, and is vested by Christ in earthly kings and princes within their own kingdoms.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the Romanist doctrine of Papal supremacy is fraudulent. If this charge be true, then the Roman Catholic Church is really no Church in the true sense, because it ". . . is here opposed to the Church or people of God; and because we are commanded to come out of it: whereas we may not wholly forsake any people til they forsake Christ."<sup>2</sup> This is not to say that the Christian Church has not been within the Roman Catholic Church. It was there throughout all the development of popery, directly from the apostles. It lay hidden, however, until the time of Luther when it came forth into fullest expression. That is the Church of which William Perkins was a minister.<sup>3</sup>

William Perkins did not limit himself to the foregoing beliefs and practices in his denunciation of the Roman Church. Among other customs that he was certain were not a part of the Christian exercise, was that of taking vows and also fasting. He was convinced that the Romanist teachers misunderstood the phrase, "Blessed are the poore in spirit. . ."<sup>4</sup> Taking the phrase literally, the Romanist doctors translated the 'poore' to indicate outward poverty. However, the 'poore' in the pas-

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, *op. cit.*, I, p. 608. Cf. *ibid.*, III, p. 237. Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 617. Cf. *ibid.*, III, p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 616. Cf. *ibid.*, II, p. 159.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, III, p. 5. Sermon in the Mount. Cf. *ibid.*, II, pp. 98-101.

sage in the Sermon on the Mount, had reference to those who by reason of their poverty were miserable and wretched, lacking in the outward comforts. These are opposed to the rich who have sufficient to fulfill the earthly wants and desires. The Romanist vow of poverty does not coincide with this Scriptural study, because this poverty is not brought about by political, economic, and social circumstances. ". . . for who do live in greater ease, or enjoy more freedom from the crosses and vexations of this life, then their begging Friars?"<sup>1</sup>

Regarding religious fasting, there are three proper uses.

The first is, that thereby the minde may become attentive in meditation of the duties of godlines to be performed. The second is, that the rebellion of the flesh may be subdued: for the flesh pampered becomes an instrument of licentiousnes. The third, (as I take it) the chiefe end of a religious fast is, to professe our guiltines, and to testifie our humiliation before God for our sinnes: . . .<sup>2</sup>

The Romanists on the contrary prescribe and appoint set times for fasting, ruling that observation of these times is mandatory. The Protestant belief is that the Church has liberty to establish a time of religious fasting as the occasions present themselves.

In keeping the fast, the Romanists "allow the drinking of wine, water, electuaries, and that often within the compasse of their appointed fast: yea, they allow the eating of one meale on a fast day at noone tide, . . ."<sup>3</sup> The Cambridge Reformer

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 5. Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 596.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 597. Cf. ibid., II, pp. 104-105.

thought this practice was absurd. It was not the practice found in the Old Testament; "yea it doth frustrate the end of fasting. For the bodily abstinence is an outward meanes and signe whereby we acknowledge our guiltinesse of any of the blessings of God."<sup>1</sup>

The primary difference between the Protestant and the Romanist purposes for fasting is to be found in the basis of the practice. The Roman Church did not make fasting an end in itself, but a part of the worship of God. The Protestants believed, on the other hand, that fasting was an exercise 'indifferent' (or having no Biblical warrant for or against) in itself, and as a consequence not a part of the worship of God. It can be used to further the worship of God, and thereby make the Christian more fit in his worship.<sup>2</sup>

It is not difficult to understand the fear of Rome, its hierarchical domination of the laity, and its ardent demands for absolute adherence to the system of doctrine established through the ages. Nor is it difficult to understand the natural iconoclastic reaction of the Reformers and their followers. "Rome was a corrupt Church, which had set aside in many ways the authority of the Scriptures to make way for her own innovations."<sup>3</sup> If the Romanists had Scriptural foundation, or had

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 597. I.e. Man's guiltiness as opposed to the blessings of God.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 598.

<sup>3</sup> Davies, Horton, The Worship of the English Puritans, (Dacre Press, Westminster, 1948), p. 8.

interpreted Scripture by Scripture in support of their doctrine and practices, Perkins and others who followed his leading would not have objected strongly to the Roman Church. Many things that might have been termed 'indifferent' had become symbols of the Roman Church and had to be cast forth from true Christian belief and worship. So determined were the Puritans, and Perkins particularly, to substantiate their stand, that they sought every means to display the difference of the truth found in the Church of England and the error and falsehood of the Roman Catholic Church. It is this, more than anything, which caused Perkins to brand the Romanists as believers in a false Church and a false hope. "A Reprobate may in truth bee made partaker of all that is contained in the religion of the Church of Rome: and a Papist by his religion cannot goe beyond a Reprobate."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 396.

## CHAPTER IV

### THEOLOGY - DOGMATICS

Professor M. M. Knappen has said that only two Puritan theologians of the Elizabethan era had risen above the level of mere controversy. One was a brilliant young Puritan scholar, Dudley Fenner, who published a treatise on theology. Though endorsed by Cartwright, it never proved a popular work or exerted great influence. It was far too profound for the average reader. William Perkins, the other theologian, produced a type of theological foundation for life that was less penetrating and thereby "proved more attractive to the English Puritans."<sup>1</sup>

The core of Perkins' theology is found in his treatise Armilla Aurea or The Golden Chaine which was first published in 1590. Evidently it was originally set forth in lecture form to the students at Cambridge University, and was delivered in Old St. Andrew's Church, Cambridge, as were so many of his works. In 1591, the Armilla Aurea was translated into English and went through fourteen editions as a separate treatise besides going through nearly as many in Perkins' collected works.

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<sup>1</sup> Knappen, M. M., Tudor Puritanism, (Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1939), p. 373.



There was a relationship between these two works. Both begin with the same definition of theology, and both make the same distinction between God and His Works.<sup>1</sup>

William Perkins began his system of dogmatics from Holy Scripture, his authority in all matters of doctrine. He assumed that Scripture should be distinguished into sacred sciences, that it "is a doctrine sufficient to live well."<sup>2</sup> The first sacred science, Theology, is principal over all others. He defined Theology as "a science of living well and blessedly forever."<sup>3</sup> Soteriology is its primary characteristic. The other sacred sciences are "attendants or hand-maides."<sup>4</sup> These were listed and defined.

- I. Ethiques, a doctrine of living honestly and civilly.
- II. Oeconomikes, a doctrine of governing a family.
- III. Politikes, a doctrine of the right administration of a common-weale.
- IV. Ecclesiasticall discipline, a doctrine of well ordering the Church.
- V. The Iewes Common-weale, in as much as it differeth from Church gouvernement.
- VI. Prophecie, the doctrine of breaching well.
- VII. Academie, the doctrine of governing Schooles well, especially those of the Prophets.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Fennerum, Dudleium, Sacra theologia sive veritas qua est secundum pietatem, (Sumptibus Henrici Laurenti, Amstelodami, 1632).

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, W., Workes, (Iohn Legatt, London, 1612), I, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 10. Ibid., I, p. 11. Cf. Van Baarsel, J. J. William Perkins, (H. P. De Swart & Zoon, 's Gravenhage, 1913), p. 89. Van Baarsel indicates this is a place where the Ramian logic materially influenced Perkins. On page 69 he expressed dislike for Perkins' definition of theology, saying that Theology is not only "a blissful life, but also knowledge of God."

<sup>4</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, pp. 10 and 11.

Theology is divided into two doctrines: God and His Works, God being the great presupposition. However, eight evidences for God's existence are given supporting this supposition:

1. by the course of nature: 2. by the nature of the soule of man: 3. by the distinction of things honest and dishonest: 4. by the terror of conscience: 5. by the regiment of ciuill societies: 6. the order of all causes hauing euer recourse to some former beginning: 7. the determination of all things to their seuerall ends: 8. the consent of all men well in their wits.<sup>1</sup>

## I - BELIEF IN GOD

William Perkins was one of the first English theologians who faced the new era which demanded more than adherence to Reformed tenets or the mere condemnation of Romanist doctrine. He and his immediate successors were forced to meet a new demand which Professor Perry Miller describes as

. . . the task of bringing God to time and to reason, of justifying His ways to man in conceptions meaningful to the intellect, of caging and confining the transcendent Force, the inexpressible and unfathomable Being, by the laws of ethics, and of doing this somehow without losing the sense of the hidden God, without reducing the Divinity to a mechanism, without depriving him of unpredictability, absolute power, fearfulness, and mystery. In the final analysis this task came down to ascertaining the reliability of human reason and the trustworthiness of human experience as measurement of the divine character - in short, to the problem of human comprehension of this mysterious thing we today call the universe.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 11. Cf. ibid., I, p. 3. Perkins in his catechism discussed God and the reason for His existence.

<sup>2</sup> Miller, Perry, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity", Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Vol. xxxii (Boston, 1937), p. 254.

The new era demanded a logic that would amplify the pure dogmatics of John Calvin. Calvinistic doctrine "required concise explication, syllogistic proof, intellectual as well as spiritual focus. It needed, in short, the one thing which, at bottom, it could not admit - a rationale."<sup>1</sup> There were those, among whom was William Perkins, whose thought went beyond the sixteenth century English Calvinism in an attempt to correct some of its difficulties.

Stoic argumentation was employed by William Perkins (that is, the invisible objector similarly used with effect by St. Paul) to clarify Calvinism for his readers. It was necessary at the same time to be far more discreet than his predecessor John Calvin. As a result, Perkins developed the complex outline system of heads and subheads, and also used the syllogism when opportunity appeared. This is clearly displayed in the treatise, Cases of Conscience, where he soliloquized, enlarging on the evidences of God's existence. His first argument was cosmological, "taken from the creation and frame of the great bodie of the world, and the thinges therein contained."<sup>2</sup> The second was teleological, "taken from the preservation and gouernement of the world created."<sup>3</sup> The third was moral. "The soule is endued with excellent giftes of vnderstanding and

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<sup>1</sup> Miller, op. cit., p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 50.

reason."<sup>1</sup> Man then has the gift to discern between good and evil. He does not have this gift by his own ability, but from another source beyond himself, "which is, power, wisdom, and understanding it self: and that is God."<sup>2</sup> The fourth argument was ethnological, that within the soul of every man without exception there exists the principle that there is a God. Then the ethnic groups were studied to illustrate a common seeking beyond Man's own sphere of life. The fifth argument was also teleological. Rather than dealing with the First Cause in the practical way he did in the second argument, William Perkins dealt with it in a philosophical manner. Yet, he was mindful of his readers who were not so versed in philosophy as was he.

In the world there is to bee seene an excellent wise frame and order of all things. One creature dependeth vpon another by a certaine order of causes: in which, some are first and aboue in higher place, some are next and inferiour, some are the basest and the lowest.

Now these lowest are moued of those that are superiour to them, and alwaies the superiour is the cause of the inferiour, and that whereof the inferiour depends. Something then there must bee that is the cause of all causes, that must be caused by none, and must be the cause of all: For in things wherein there is order, there is alway some first and soueraigne cause: and where there is no first or last, there the Creatures are infinite.<sup>3</sup>

One might then say that we know there is a God by an intuitive and procured awareness. Calvin set forth the doc-

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 52.

trine in this manner,

That there exists in the human mind and indeed by natural instinct, some sense of Deity, we hold to be beyond dispute, since God himself, to prevent any man from pretending ignorance, has indueed all men with some idea of his Godhead, . . .<sup>1</sup>

Also Peter Martyr, the great Oxford theologian of the preceding reign, wrote, "Knowledge of God - is naturally innate in the minds of all."<sup>2</sup> Heinrich Heppe summed the thought of Calvin and Martyr (which likewise applied to Perkins), "This innate knowledge of God, notitia Dei insita is formed in man by his reason and his conscience into a notitia acquisita. Hence there is a religio naturalis."<sup>3</sup>

The other basis of proof was one which was more familiar, for it was "taken from the light of Grace."<sup>4</sup> It is that light given by God to His Church through the Scriptures,

and this giues a further confirmation, then nature doth. For the light of nature is onely a way or preparation to faith; But this light serues to beget faith, and causeth vs to beleue there is a God.<sup>5</sup>

Religio naturalis and religio revelata are both essential to belief in God, for they are both interrelated, and it is through these that we know God.

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<sup>1</sup> Calvin, John, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. Henry Beveridge; (James Clarke & Co.; London, 1949), I, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Heppe, Heinrich, Reformed Dogmatics, trans. G. T. Thomson, (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London, 1950), p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 1. Cf. Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 356. "A Reprobate hath in his mind a certen knowledge of God, . . ."

<sup>4</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 52.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., II, p. 52.

## II - THE NATURE AND WORK OF GOD

God was further defined in the treatise on the Apostles'  
Creed.

. . . God is an essence, to shew, that he is a thing absolutely subsisting in himselfe, & by himselfe, not receiving his being from any other. And, herein he differs from all other creatures whatsoever, which have subsisting and being from him alone.<sup>1</sup>

It is in truth a description of "his most lively and most perfect essence",<sup>2</sup> a spiritual essence, not seen by the eye of Man.

The nature of God is divided into two parts, His simpleness and His infiniteness. The simpleness of God's nature "is that by which he is void of all Logically relation in arguments,"<sup>3</sup> "for whatsoever thing he is, hee is the same by one & the same singular & indivisible essence."<sup>4</sup> His infiniteness contains two relationships, His eternity and His exceeding greatness. As to His eternity, He is "infinite in time, without any beginning & without end: infinite in place; because he is every where, & excluded no where, within all places, and forth of all places."<sup>5</sup> His exceeding greatness relates

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 128.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, p. 128.

to His holiness, His infinite wisdom, love, mercy, and goodness.

The simpleness and infiniteness of God does not place Him so remotely as to be only a Force beyond the World scene. The very nature of God implies a Living God among men, a Divine Nature that is perpetually active, "living, and moving in it self."<sup>1</sup> This continual activity is due to three attributes, His Wisdom, His Will, and His Omnipotence. His Omnipotence is known in two ways: He is able to do whatever He desires, and He is able "to doe more then he will doe."<sup>2</sup> From these attributes come God's glory and His majesty or magnificence.

The works of God are those that He does out of His Divine essence. His action is bound up in His decree and its execution. The decree is that whereby God necessarily, yet freely, determined all things from eternity.

The remainder of the treatise Armilla Aurea was used to discuss this decree and its execution. The work of God is divided into His 'operation' and His 'operative permission'.<sup>3</sup> God's operation is His "effectuall producing of all things, which either haue beeing or moving, or which are done."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 16.

His operative permission is that which He permits others to do. That is to say, Good is done only by God through His effectual working. Evil is done by others only through God's permission. God then has relation to Evil only insofar as He permits it to exist. It was emphatically expressed that He cannot be the Author of Evil because of the very nature of the decree. "Now to permit sinne and the beeing of it, is neither the causing of sinne, nor the doing of it, but the not hindring of it, to which he is not bound."<sup>1</sup>

### III - CHRISTOLOGY

Professor Knappen mentions a surprising lack of Christological thought in the Puritan movement, and he attributes this lack to the shadow that was cast over the Puritan world by Calvinism whereby John Calvin determined the tone of thought for the immediate succeeding generations.

It is quite unfair to say that the Puritans were an Old Testament group who cared little for the teachings or attitude of the new dispensation. As we have seen, their standard of authority was a New Testament one, and they were prolific in their output of commentaries on the epistles and apocalypse. But it is true that the Four Gospels do not appear to have attracted them particularly. Possibly the Catholic treatment of the narratives of the birth and passion repelled them. Possibly their historical acumen was not such as to enable them to make much use of the otherworldly teachings themselves. Certainly the person of Christ figures very little in their literature.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 494.

<sup>2</sup> Knappen, op. cit., p. 376.



This is true in part of William Perkins, who had not developed step by step the doctrine of the Person of Christ. However, the doctrine is found in his works. It is quite evident in the treatise on the Apostles' Creed.<sup>1</sup>

Though he spoke of Jesus Christ "as the Minister of circumcision for the truth of God," and as "a Prophet like unto Elijah and Elisha,"<sup>2</sup> he was more positive when he set Jesus Christ forth as God Himself united with human nature (the body and soul of Man), "so as the Godhead of the Sonne and the manhood concurring together, made but one person."<sup>3</sup>

The place given to Christ as Mediator is one characteristic of the Person of Christ. Also, the extent of the development of the offices of Christ leads one to believe that he was not oblivious of the place of Christology in Puritan thought.

William Ames even set forth an entire chapter to deal with the Person of Christ. He not only dealt with Him as Mediator, but in succeeding sections shaped more fully the picture of Christ through His offices, His satisfaction for sin, His life, His death and His exaltation.<sup>4</sup>

Neither of these two Puritans presented a full picture

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, pp. 166-267.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 286. Cf. *infra*, p. 121 ff. for the relationship of Jesus Christ to Predestination.

<sup>4</sup> Ames, William, The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, (Edward Griffin, London, [n.d.]), pp. 69-99. Ames was a famous pupil of Perkins.

of Christ, for neither dealt with His cosmic significance extensively nor with some of the other aspects of Christology which we today feel essential. The era in which they lived did not challenge men's minds as to who Jesus Christ actually is. Instead, they were concerned more with the part He has to play in the individual's life, and what He means to the believer in this life. This concern for a practical relation of the Son of God to life was foremost in the mind of Perkins. The contemporary Puritan theologians did not match Perkins' viewpoint. It was this concern for the practical that has set him apart as the distinguished Puritan thinker of the late Elizabethan period. The desire to apply Christ more fully to life was an outcome of the English Reformation. He sought a more balanced interpretation than that of the Roman Catholics. The outward portraiture of Jesus Christ, the crucifixes, the carved images,<sup>1</sup> the concept of Transubstantiation in the Roman Catholic belief and worship drove the Puritans to be concerned with a simple approach to Jesus Christ directly by the spiritual hand of faith.<sup>2</sup> The believer must have no material impressions of Christ. In this way then, Jesus Christ is applied to men in the most important sphere, that of eternal salvation. It is for this reason primarily that Perkins and Ames based their Christology principally in Jesus Christ as Mediator.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Supra, pp. 86-89.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit. I, pp. 237-238.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. infra, pp. 122 f. for the doctrine of the Mediator in predestination.

William Perkins sought to give Jesus Christ his rightful place in men's minds and souls. All Scripture is about Him. "The summe and substance of the Bible is to conclude, that Iesus Christ the Sonne of Marie, is the Sonne of God and the Redeemer of mankinde."<sup>1</sup> He also argued from prophecy<sup>2</sup> that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. Christ even declared His own Deity,<sup>3</sup> and no one has before or since made the same declaration without being discovered as taking the honor of God falsely. The Holy Spirit promised by Christ also testifies to His Deity. Therefore, it must be concluded that no one can truly know Jesus Christ until he knows Him as ". . . our Redeemer, and the very price of our redemption."<sup>4</sup>

#### IV - PREDESTINATION

Predestination is not a fatalist's creed, but one which has its basis in the Word of God and in reason. In fact, it has its foundation in the Counsel of God, ". . . his eternall & vnchangeable decree, whereby hee hath ordained all things either past, present, or to come, for his owne glorie . . ."<sup>5</sup> The Counsel of God is composed of two parts, both essential

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel 9.24.

<sup>3</sup> St. John 7 and 8.

<sup>4</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 627.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, p. 140.

to each other and inseparable, His foreknowledge and His will or pleasure.

His foreknowledge, [is that][sic] whereby he did foresee al things which were to come. His will, [is that][sic] whereby in general manner he wils & ordaines whatsoeuer is to come to passe: and therefore such things as God altogether nilleth, can not come to passe.

The execution of the decree<sup>2</sup> in this earthly arena is called Predestination, whereby God "hath before all the worlds decreed the electing of some to saluation: so he hath decreed the refusall and relecting of others to condemnation."<sup>3</sup> Lest there be misunderstanding, Perkins added, "Homo non damnatur propter decretum, sed propter peccatum."<sup>4</sup> God then is not to be blamed for those who are the reprobate.

The elect are described as those whom God

. . . calleth in the time appointed for the same purpose. This calling of the Elect is nothing else but a singling and a seuering of them out of this vile world, and the customes thereof, to bee citizens of the kingdome of glory after this life. And the time of their calling is tearmed in Scripture, the day of visitation, the day of saluation, the time of grace.

This seuering and choosing of the elect out of the world, is then performed, when God by his holy spirit indueth them

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 140.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. supra, p. 106.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 516. Perkins indicated that God accomplished this through the Creation and Fall. Cf. ibid., I, pp. 16 and 295.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 516, note. "Man is not condemned by reason of decree, but by reason of sin."

with true saving faith: a wonderfull gift, peculiar to the elect.<sup>1</sup>

This doctrine is based upon the Word of God, it has been said, not upon Man's judgment concerning God. The precept was in one sense directed against the Romanist dogma as established in the Council of Trent. In the other sense, it gained prominence because of the inroads of semi-Pelagianism among some Protestant groups. The common listener and reader was urged to go to the Pauline epistles, particularly Romans, and then proceed to the Gospel According to St. John. The passages would provide proof of the doctrine of predestination, and would also be the key to understanding it completely. Not only would it be found that this doctrine is in harmony with Holy Scripture, but also coincides with Man's reason and with natural revelation.<sup>2</sup>

William Ames was careful to point out that predestination is not dependent upon cause, reason, or any outward condition, "but it doth purely proceed from the will of him that predestineth."<sup>3</sup>

When one realizes the infiltration of the doctrine of

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<sup>1</sup> perkins, op.cit., I, p. 362. "The elect onely are said to haue their names written in the Booke of life." Cf. ibid., I, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 605 (Ese 3 recto), Epistle to the Reader. Perkins listed ten concise steps to the doctrine of predestination.

<sup>3</sup> Ames, op. cit., p. 104.

Arminius into the Church of England, he is able to understand why Perkins and his successors placed such emphasis upon belief in predestination. "The persuasive strength," says Haller, "of the doctrine of predestination, as the Puritan preachers presented it, sprang not from its metaphysical but its moral validity."<sup>1</sup> Speaking further of this doctrine, Professor Haller mentions its applicability to the human situation in that day.

It was extremely apposite. It supplied a basis both practical and ideal for decision. It suggested an attitude and a line of conduct. Put to the test of experience, it applied and it worked. The concept of universal depravity, by levelling all superiority not of the spirit, enormously enhanced the self-respect of the ordinary man. If none were righteous, then one man was as good as another. God chose whom He would and the distinctions of this world counted for nothing. The concept of free grace still further heightened his confidence. If the real aristocracy was the aristocracy created by God, then nothing really counted but character and inner worth. Only they were Jews who were Jews inwardly, and the true circumcision was not that of the body. If election was manifested not by outward conformity to an imposed law but by the struggle of the spirit within against the wickedness and disobedience of the flesh, then any man might find reason for hope within his own breast. If all this was predestined, then there could be no fear concerning the issue of life's ordeal. 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' The triumph of the saints was foreordained. Therefore nothing they could desire was impossible for them to attain. Heaven was their's already, and if presently they demanded possession of the earth as well, that was no more than human.

The doctrine of predestination was considered in three ways. The first was the basis, then the means, and third, the degrees. In the first place, Jesus Christ is the basis,

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<sup>1</sup> Haller, William, The Rise of Puritanism, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1938), pp. 89-90.

being called from all eternity to be Mediator, that through Him all that should be saved might be chosen. This is not to say that Christ is subordinate to the very decree of election. He is only subordinate in the execution of the decree. His Incarnation is what gives it reality.

The means of executing the decree of God's election are His Covenant and its seal. "Gods couenant, is his contract with man concerning the obtaining of life eternall, vpon a certen condition."<sup>1</sup> God promised to bind Himself to Man and would thereby be his God if he would perform a 'certain condition'. Man, on the other hand, promised God through a vow that he would give complete obedience unto Him as Lord. Man would also perform the 'certain condition' demanded by God in the Covenant.

This general Covenant is to be viewed in two aspects, the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace.<sup>2</sup> The Covenant of Works "is Gods couenant, made with condition of perfect obedience, and is expressed in the morall law."<sup>3</sup> The Moral Law was defined as that part of the Word of God that demands perfect obedience in Man's nature as well as his actions, and permits nothing less. With the demand, of course, is the reward of eternal life to whoever fulfills the Law.<sup>4</sup> Failure

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix III. A Brief History of Covenant Theology.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 299.

to do so brings upon the individual the opposite, which is eternal death. A summary of God's demands is to be found in the Decalogue or Ten Commandments.

The primary purpose of the Law, especially for the unregenerate, is to expose sin in all its hideousness, thereby making sin known. The second purpose is the manifestation of sin because of Man's flesh which causes him to seek to do evil, and to avoid the good that God desires of him.<sup>1</sup> In the third place, the Law of God pronounces the sentence of everlasting condemnation upon Man for the least infraction of His Law without providing any hope for pardon.

Man finds release from the Covenant of the Law in the other Covenant, that of Grace. God in this testament promises the gift of Jesus Christ if men are willing to receive Him as their Savior, and to repent of their sins.<sup>2</sup> The Covenant was confirmed by the death of Jesus Christ. Men make no great promises to God in this Covenant of Grace. They principally receive as heirs of the testament.<sup>3</sup>

The Covenant of Grace is characterized in the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament anticipated in types and shadows

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 164-165.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Robinson, John, An Appendix to Mr. Perkins His Six Principles of Christian Religion, (1641), Sig. A<sub>3</sub> recto. Robinson describes the heir of the testament as the member of the Church. "By the covenant which God made with Abraham and his seed: which was the covenant of the Gospel confirmed in Christ, the seale thereof circumcision, being the seale of the righteousness of faith." Robinson was a famous pupil of Perkins and an interpreter of Perkins to seventeenth century Puritans.



the coming of Jesu Christ to live among men. The new Testament declares Him already come as shown in His activity in the Gospels.<sup>1</sup>

The seal of the Covenant is found in the sacraments. "A Sacrament is that, whereby Christ and his saving graces, are by certaine externall rites, signified, exhibited, and sealed to a Christian man."<sup>2</sup> Then too, the sacraments are signs of an inward commitment, assurance, and union with Christ.

The sacraments are two, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In baptism, the Covenant of Grace is solemnized between God and the believer who is being baptized. God first promises reconciliation in the Covenant. That is, He promises remission of sins and everlasting life to the believers being baptized. Then He gives the seal of the Covenant. The outward part is the actual baptism or washing by water. The inward seal is the pledge of the Holy Spirit. The believer, on the other hand, binds himself to give allegiance to the Trinity through faith. His faith is thereby given outward expression in the sacrament of baptism.<sup>3</sup> His allegiance is expressed in his faith whereby he accepts all of God's promises, and vows to obey His commandments.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 70. Cf. infra, pp. 119-120.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 258. Ibid., II, p. 74 on the pros and cons as to the necessity of baptism. Cf. ibid., II, p. 204 as to the relationship of infants and the Covenant, including arguments in support of infant baptism.

God provided this sacrament in order that our faith may be confirmed, for by it God binds Himself to the believer.

Now a sacrament doth confirme our faith, not by any inherent or proper power it hath in it selfe, as hath a soueraigne medicine receiued by a patient, the which, whether a man sleep or wake, confirmeth his strength: but rather by reasoning, and vsing signes; when the holy Ghost shall frame in our hearts such a conclusion as this:

All such as are conuerted, rightly vsing the Sacraments, shall receiue Christ and his graces.  
But I am conuerted, and either now do, or before haue rightly vsed the Sacraments;  
Therefore I shall receiue Christ and his graces.<sup>1</sup>

Another aspect of Covenant theology was the relationship between the Law and the Gospel. This, of course, was not new in Perkins' day. Calvin and other Continental Reformers dealt with the relationship.<sup>2</sup>

The Law and the Gospel were used with effect in Perkins' works. Van Baarsel, however, found this to be quite contradictory in places.

Neonomistische tendenzen komen bij Perkins nu en dan duidelijk te voorschijn). Meermalen stelt hij de wettelijk gerechtigheid, die in Adam en Christus was, tegenover de evangelische, die in de bekeerden wordt gevonden.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Calvin, op. cit., I, pp. 363-367.

<sup>3</sup> Van Baarsel, op. cit., p. 88. "Neonomistic tendencies appear in Perkins in different places. Often he puts the justice according to the Law which was in Adam and Christ over against the evangelical[or Gospel][sic] which is found in converted people." This is one of the two places Van Baarsel indicates that Perkins was materially influenced by Ramus. The other was in his definition of theology.

The Word of God, said Perkins, is not applied correctly unless the Law and the Gospel are considered.<sup>1</sup> It was questionable as to what he meant by Law and Gospel. In response, perhaps to such an inquiry, he answered, "By the Lawe I vnderstand that part of Gods word that promiseth to the beleeuers."<sup>2</sup> Another distinction was made. "The law then requires doing to saluation, and the Gospel beleeuing, and nothing else."<sup>3</sup> God is the Author of both the Law and the Gospel as is evidenced by their intrinsic nature. They both require justice and righteousness to salvation, and they both have the glory of God as the final goal.<sup>4</sup> They differ in that the Law is natural and was to be obeyed by Man prior to the Fall. Further, the Law demands God's justice without God's mercy. The Gospel, on the other hand, draws both justice and mercy together in Jesus Christ. The Law requires absolute righteousness in Man, but the Gospel reveals that God accepts us through the righteousness imputed to us through Jesus Christ. The Law threatens God's judgment without mercy. In contrast, the Gospel displays mercy to Man in his sin through and by Christ, if he first repents and believes. In the last place, the Law promises life to the one who does what the Law demands, but

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 495. Cf. ibid., I, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 236.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 495.

the Gospel offers salvation through faith. Faith is not a work, but is only an instrument drawing us to Christ who is the sole Person who can make us righteous.<sup>1</sup>

The ende and vse of the Gospell is, first to manifest that righteousness in Christ, whereby the whole law is fully satisfied and saluation attained. Secondly, it is the instrument, and, as it were, the conduit pipe of the holy Ghost, to fashion and deriue faith into the soule: by which faith, they which beleeye, doe, as with an hand, apprehend Christs righteousness . . .<sup>2</sup>

There is a perfection of the Law and a perfection of the Gospel. "Perfection of the Law is when a man loues God and his neighbour, according to the rigour of the law."<sup>3</sup> It is impossible to keep the Law in this life, however. The elect of God will be able to keep it in the life to come. Perfection of the Gospel is the desire and effort of God's children to obey Him. God's acceptance of this effort is made possible through Jesus Christ, the Mediator.

Because we cannot fulfill the law, we must make it a glasse to see our impotencie, & what we cannot doe: and it must be our schoolemaster to driue vs to Christ. And by our impotency we must take occasion to make prayer of God for his Spirit to enable vs to obey the lawes of God. Thus come we to be doers of the law, and no otherwise.<sup>4</sup>

The Law then serves as a guide for the regenerate person, leading him in obedience to God through Jesus Christ, and thereby

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 33. Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 102. Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 235.

penetrating his whole life.<sup>1</sup> This obedience "must be esteemed and considered as it is in the acceptance of God, . . . esteeming things done not by the effect & absolute doing of them, but by the affection of the doer,"<sup>2</sup>

The degrees are expressed in the execution of God's election by His love and the declaration of the love.<sup>3</sup> The love of God is shown toward those who are elect through Jesus Christ even though the elect are still in their sins. The declaration of His love is realized in two ways, through elect persons and through infants (including children through the age of discretion) who are elect.

The declaration of God's love to those in the years of discretion comprises four steps. The first is effectual calling, "whereby a sinner being severed from the world, is entertained into God's family."<sup>4</sup> Effectual calling is composed of God's election (that is, the separation of the sinner from the 'cursed estate' of mankind), and the reciprocal gift of God whereby the believer called can say that Christ is his and he is Christ's. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head, and the person called is a member of His mystical body.

The second step in the declaration of God's love to those

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 286.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 77.

able to receive it is justification, the accounting of the believer righteous before God through the obedience of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

In the third place, sanctification is the means whereby the believer is relieved of the domination of sin and is gradually renewed in righteousness and holiness. It involves dying to sin and self, and being alive and purified to Christ. This purified life takes into account every walk of our life.

The fourth step relates to the future estate of the believer, the perfect transformation into the image of God. Christ has abolished death. Therefore, the passing of the believer from this life is primarily the shedding of the corrupt mortal body and the taking on of the glorified body as well as the transportation into the Kingdom of the Son.

Mention has already been made that Jesus Christ is the basis of predestination, and His Incarnation gives this doctrine reality.<sup>2</sup> The Incarnation of Jesus Christ is the union of the two natures, God and Man. The union is brought about in the "Conception, by which his humane nature was by the wonderfull power and operation of God, both immediately . . . and miraculously framed of the substance of the Virgin Mary."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra, p. 74 f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. supra, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 25.

It was further brought about through sanctification whereby Christ's human nature was purified, completely severed by the power of the Holy Spirit from the Virgin Mary so that there was no sin or corruption, that thereby it might be holy and fit to pay the penalty for Man's sin. Finally, the union was brought about by the

Assumption, whereby the Word, that is, the second person in Trinity, tooke vpon him flesh, and the seede of Abraham, namely, that his humane Nature: to the end, that it being destitute of a proper and personall substance, might in the person of the Word obtaine it; subsisting, and as it were, being supported of the Word for euer.<sup>1</sup>

The Incarnation of Jesus Christ is most clearly taught by His birth, He being the Word of God and the Son of David born of the Virgin Mary. He was both circumcised, thereby fulfilling the righteousness of the Law, and baptized into His office as Mediator thereby permitting Him to bear the guilt of Man's sin. Perkins proved this conviction in the following:

The summe and substance of the Bible is to conclude, that Iesus the Sonne of Marie, is the Sonne of God and the Redeemer of mankinde; and it may be concluded in this syllogisme -

He that shall come of the seed of Abraham, and David, & shall be born of a virgin; that shal preach the glad tidings of the Gospell, satisfie the Law, offer up an oblation of himself for the sinnes of them that beleue: ouercome death by his death & resurrection; ascend into heauen, and in fulnesse of time come againe to iudge both the quicke and the dead, is the true Messias and Sauior of the world.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 25.

But Iesus of Nazareth the Sonne of Mary, is he in whom alone all these things shal come to passe.

Therefore hee onely is the true Messias and Sauilour of the world.

This proposition or first part of the argument, is laid downe in the olde testament: the assumption or second part, in the New: The conclusion is, the question in hand, the scope and drift of them both.<sup>1</sup>

Since Christ fulfilled the Law and was baptized, the efficacy of the sacraments depend entirely upon Him. He is the Mediator under both the Covenant of the Law and the Covenant of Grace. He is therefore the nucleus of the Covenant relationship. The result is that the entire doctrine of election hinges upon Jesus Christ as Mediator. The very term indicates a 'go-between', and Jesus Christ is just that. Because He is both God the Son and Man, He is the mean between the extremes, namely God and the elect. He is the middle between the elect and God only, "First, according to his humanitie, whereby hee receiued the spirit without measure. Secondly, according to his diuine nature, namely as he is the Word."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, this office of Mediator is unique to Him alone.

The work of Christ is also described in another way. Jesus Christ is Prophet, Priest, and King. He is Prophet in that He reveals the means of salvation and God's Word directly from the Father, both of which comprise Holy Scripture. He is Priest

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 25.



in that He performed the task whereby eternal life is obtained. His task involved satisfaction of God's anger for Man's sin by performing perfect obedience to God's will through His passion and death. His death was necessary, for thereby He confirmed to us the Covenant of Grace promised to us by God. The penalty was paid and the Law has been fulfilled by His holy work and obedience to the Law.

The other part of His task involves His intercession, whereby He is the Advocate before the Father for the elect. Christ is King in that He "distributeth his giftes, and disposeth all things for the benefit of the elect."<sup>1</sup> This office involves His exaltation which is found at three levels, His resurrection, His ascension to prepare a place for the elect, and His place in Heaven at the right hand of God. His reign in Heaven indicates that Christ has all power, glory, and dominion.<sup>2</sup> This reign does have a relationship to earth. On earth He is King over the elect, and is therefore the basis of predestination.

A typical Millennial viewpoint relating to the believer and the Last Judgment was presented. Perkins did not go to the extreme in speculation as to the date of the Coming of Christ that was indulged in by the later Puritans. He very carefully stressed the uncertainty of the time of Christ's

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 31.

Coming.

Now the truth which may be auouched against all, is this, that no man can know, or set downe, or coniecture the day, the weeke, the moneth, the yeare, or the age wherein the second comming of Christ and the last iudgement shall be . . . now we know that a man that keepeth his house, can not coniecture or imagine when a thiefe will come: and therefore no man can set downe the particular time or age, when Christ shall come to iudgement. This must we holde steadfastly, & if we read the contrary in the writings of the men, we are not to beleue their sayings, but account of them as the deuices of men, which haue no ground in Gods word.<sup>1</sup>

Perkins returned to his definition of theology in the doctrine of Judgment.<sup>2</sup> When the judgment of God is placed upon men, and the elect and reprobate are separated, "the elect shall enioy immediately blessednesse in the kingdome of heauen."<sup>3</sup> This blessedness is the reward of good works. Because of God's mercy, He accepts good works as a result of the imputation of Christ's righteousness upon His elect, not because good works are meritorious for justification. In the glorifying of His elect, He thereby glorifies Himself as they honor Him. God's glory then, is the goal of all doctrine and action on the part of men.

Dr. J. J. Van Baarsel, a brilliant Dutch theologian, believes that Perkins placed too great a stress on election and reprobation.<sup>4</sup> He also criticizes the Cambridge theologian

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. supra, p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 95.

<sup>4</sup> Van Baarsel, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

for removing the Covenant of Works in the formal sense from the state of righteousness.<sup>1</sup> This Dutch thinker, referring to the purpose of the Incarnation, mentions that Jesus Christ came as God and Man principally because the Covenant of Works was broken by Man, and that there could be no other means of saving Man. The question of whether the Incarnation should be regarded as involved in the doctrine of Redemption or was already involved in the doctrine of Creation has been warmly debated since the time of the Scholastics. Think of the question another way. Would Jesus Christ, the Son of God, have come to earth in human flesh if Man had not sinned? On the whole, the Reformed Church joined with Thomas Aquinas in believing that the Incarnation was necessitated by the Fall of Man. It is this position that is attractive to Van Baarsel.<sup>2</sup> He feels that Perkins was out of order in placing the Covenant of Works after Jesus Christ. Perkins' position was parallel to more recent theologians as Dorner, Ebrard, and Westcott who argued that such a tremendous fact as the Incarnation could not find its origin or cause in sin as an arbitrary act on the part of Man, nor was the Incarnation contingent upon Man's sin. It must have been included in the plan of God

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<sup>1</sup> Van Baarsel, op. cit., p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> This is the more historical Reformed position. Cf. Heppe, Heinrich, Reformed Dogmatics, op. cit., p. 410. Van Baarsel is greatly influenced by the writings of the Kuypers which accounts for the interest in William Perkins as theologian, and clarifies the reason for his criticism at this point.

originally. The Fall of Man did not change religion. That is, religion was in all essentials the same before the Fall as after. If a Mediator was required after the Fall, He must also have been required before the Fall. Further, the work of Christ included not only His saving work and atonement, but His position as Mediator and the Alpha and Omega, the Telos of all creation. Perkins was very careful in the presentation of his conviction that the Incarnation was necessary for God even before the Beginning. This could have led to a pantheistic concept of the eternal self-revelation of God in the world.

Jesus Christ then is the center of all things, the Beginning and the Ending.<sup>1</sup> Because of this, Jesus Christ was included before the Covenant of Works. Batholomew Keckermann, a theologian who was greatly influenced by the writings of William Perkins, supported the concept.

'This is the nucleus of the whole of theology and this is the supreme cause and the direct beginning of our deliverance from sin: I mean, the execution of the election administered through Christ's merit and efficacy, which the ancient, especially the Greek theologians, usually called the *οικονομία*, i. e. dispensation of the means leading to salvation.'<sup>2</sup>

The position held by Perkins regarding the purpose of the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh was no doubt an attempt to bolster the Calvinistic influence in the Church of England

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<sup>1</sup> This idea is in nucleus related to the theological core of current Barthian thought. One could say that Perkins and Barth have a relative affinity at this point. The Gereformeerde Kerken of Holland rejects Barthian thought (the Kuypers were of this group).

<sup>2</sup> Heppes, H., Reformed Dogmatics, op. cit., p. 410.

against the inroads of Arminianism. He saw the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God being undermined by the younger clergymen who had come under the sway of the spreading doctrine of Arminius. It seemed a natural alternative to find the center of all things in Jesus Christ, the great Elector.

Both Van Baarsel<sup>1</sup> and August Lang<sup>2</sup> accuse Perkins of being supralapsarian. Neither develops this thought. It is true that this accusation can be substantiated throughout the works of the famous Cambridge divine. He was, however, a man of his time. He was among a noble group of theologians including Theodore B  za, Peter Martyr, Girolamo Zanchi, Zacharias Ursinus, William Ames, Gisbert Voetius, and others of equal repute who held a supralapsarian position. This view was a natural outgrowth of Calvin's emphasis on the Sovereignty of God.

Perkins in his later writings was somewhat milder in his views regarding God's relation to predestined sin in Man. His mildness was due to three reasons. Some of the writings in the latter volumes of his collected works were written late in his life and were published posthumously. In this period, his preaching and teaching were tinged with the mercy of God as well as His justice. The second reason was that some of his works were not strictly of doctrinal nature, but dealt with Christian

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<sup>1</sup> Van Baarsel, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Lang, D. August, Puritanismus und Pietismus, (Neukirchen, 1941), p. 110.

behavior and preaching as well as the social and religious conditions of the time. Some of the treatises were Biblical expositions in which only limited opportunities were available to develop the concept of predestination. In the third place, his years of preaching had somewhat softened his heart. No longer did he possess the vehement spirit of his younger days when his preaching message was the judgment of God. Yet, he always remained the supralapsarian his is described to have been. He never renounced nor greatly corrected his former works. Sin was always regarded as a disturbance in Creation permitted by God, a view that has no place in the thinking of the infralapsarian.<sup>1</sup>

Mention has heretofore been made of the place of faith in predestination. Little has been said of faith as a doctrine or the part it plays in Man's reconciliation with God. William Perkins twice asked the question: What is faith? The first answer was, "Faith is a wonderfull grace of God, by which a man doth apprehend and applie Christ, and all his benefits vnto himselfe."<sup>2</sup> The second answer was a corollary of the first. Faith is "A perswasion, that those things which we truly desire, God will graunt them for Christs sake."<sup>3</sup> Both answers portray the practical aspect and are indicative of his

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<sup>1</sup> The findings of Utrecht, adopted in 1908, rejected supralapsarianism as not in keeping with Reformed doctrine in Holland.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 8.

desire for simplicity.

Faith, he continued, is activated in Man through the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. This ministry is accompanied by the working of the Holy Spirit upon the individual hearer's heart in a progressive, orderly manner. "And the whole operation of the spirit stands in two principall actions. First, the enlightening of the minde: the second, the moving of the wil."<sup>1</sup>

Faith, then, is of two types, intellectual assent that a given declaration is true, and the assent that involves a commitment of the entire self as to the truth of God.<sup>2</sup> Therefore when one recites the Apostles' Creed, he gives assent from his soul that each of the articles is true.

These two types were applied another way. Every man on earth has some faith, both elect and reprobate. It may be a historical faith whereby a man believes the outward letter and history of the Word of God. It may even be a temporary faith which lasts for a given time, but never until death. Then, there is a faith in miracles,

when a man grounding himselfe on some special promise or reuelation from God, doth beleue, that some strange and extraordinarie thing, which he hath desired or foretolde, shall come to passe by the worke of God.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 127. Cf. supra, p. 71 for the Romanist view.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 124.

The faith of the elect is supernatural, a gift of God whereby the elect can know Jesus Christ the saving promise, and all other promises dependent thereon.<sup>1</sup> The believer then applies Christ, both God and Man, and all His benefits to himself by faith.<sup>2</sup> "For his Godhead without his manhood and his manhood without his Godhead, doth not reconcile vs to God."<sup>3</sup> This faith is called the 'putting on of Christ'. That is, the faith is the applying of Christ's righteousness to the human heart.<sup>4</sup>

The great truth that came forth in the Reformation was, 'The just shall live by faith'. The same truth was vital to Perkins' theology. It was not a mere theological dogma to him, but had actual application to the human soul and life. He set forth two rules whereby a man can live by faith. First, "that faith bee rightly conceived and grounded in the heart; . . ."<sup>5</sup> This conception of faith involves a knowledge of the Word of God, because faith stands in relation to the Word, the only foundation of our faith. It also involves a trust in God based upon the Word. The second rule is faith, once conceived, is to rule and reign in the heart of the elect believer. The elect is then to depend and build on this rightly

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 362.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 124.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 362.

<sup>5</sup> Id., I, pp. 476-477.



conceived faith.

Man's relationship to faith is understandable. In addition, faith has a relationship to reconciliation with God. God's Spirit works in the heart of a man by his belief in the Law and its threatenings. As a result, man has an insight into his own sins, an apprehension of God's anger, and a fear of the condemnation of God is activated. Man then dispairs of himself and what he has been.

The second action of faith in the case of our reconciliation with God, is to certifie and assure vs in conscience thereof; and that is done by a practicall syllogisme, which faith frames in the minde on this manner:

Hee that beleeueth the Gospell, shall haue all the benefits and blessings of God promised therein.  
But I beleue the Gospell, and I beleue in Christ;  
Therefore the benefits promised therein are mine.<sup>1</sup>

Continuing the practical aspects of faith, the problem is set forth as to just how much faith a Christian can have. The least amount is compared to the grain of mustard seed, "the least of all seedes."<sup>2</sup> When it is applied to a believer who is contrite but yet does not have the full assurance of the forgiveness of his sins, he prays to God that He would pardon the sins and break the ties that bind them so tightly to his human soul.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, "The greatest measure of faith, is a full perswasion of the mercy of God. For it is the strength

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 478.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 366.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 366.

and ripenesse of faith, . . ."1

What is the value of faith? Two benefits are listed. The first is the joining of the elect one to Jesus Christ, whereby he has a heavenly communion and fellowship with his Savior. God's Spirit moves and stirs within the elect believer as a result of his union with Christ. The believer is enabled to do the good that he ought to do. The second benefit that the elect believer receives as a result of his faith is the triad acts of God, Justification,<sup>2</sup> Adoption whereby the justified believer is accepted by God as one of His children, and Sanctification,

by which a Christian in his minde, in his will, and in his affections is freed from the bondage and tyrannie of sin and Satan, and is by little and little inabled through the spirit of Christ to desire and approue that which is good, and to walke in it.<sup>3</sup>

The concept of Faith was summarized after he set forth the proposition: "How to knowe our faith to be true."<sup>4</sup> This assurance is observed progressively in three ways. The beginning of true faith is found in hearing of the Word of God preached, particularly in the Gospel. The Law precedes the Gospel, preparing the way by convicting the man of his sin and activating a desire to be reconciled to God. The fruit of true faith

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 367.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. supra, pp. 72-74.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 370. Cf. supra, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 246, note. Sermon in the Mount.

is a change of the whole man both in heart and life; making the heart contrarie to it selfe in moderating the naturall affections and passions thereof, and keeping them in compassse of true obedience, and causing a man in euery state to rest contented with the will of God, . . .<sup>1</sup>

The certainty of faith is known when a man relies wholly on the will of God even though he may not be assured of God's mercy. If one lets go of God's mercy in distress, he can be assured that he has not possessed true faith, "for the iust shall liue by faith in all estates, and will with Iob, trust in God though He kill them."<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the greatest response to faith is found in prayer, the placing of requests before God "according to his word from a contrite heart in the name of Christ, with assurance to be heard."<sup>3</sup> The believer prays to God, and God alone, through Jesus Christ the Mediator showing his submission to God and His will, and also indicating his obedience to his heavenly Father. He further indicates by invocation to God that he believes and repents, and by true faith he knows and applies God's promises to himself. In the third place, the believer prays in order that he can acknowledge God to be the Author and Giver of everything good. Lastly, the believer thereby eases his mind through the pouring out of his heart to God.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 246. Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 246. Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 328.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 328. Cf. ibid., III, p. 213.

The Covenant made by the reprobate with Satan is in contrast to the Covenant of God. This Covenant is culminated because of a lack of the presence and the work of the Spirit of God. ". . . God vpon iust causes knowne to himselfe forsakes his creature the reprobate wholly and foreuer."<sup>1</sup> There are those then who possess God's Spirit only

. . . so farre forth as it shall not any whit regenerate or renew his nature: but only in outward action repressse the act of sin: so as thereby without inward change he shall bee as ciuilly iust and vpright in outward conuersation, as any in the world.<sup>2</sup>

Even though he possessed the Holy Spirit as the restraining power within him, he is a reprobate and still owes his allegiance to Satan.

Satan is a mimic of God, and acts as though He was God. There is a parallel, however, between the two. God has His Word, His sacraments, and requires faith on the part of the believer. Likewise, Satan has His own words, and seals them to His subjects through certain signs in the form of gestures, characters, and sacrifices, the latter corresponding to the sacraments in God's worship. Both are aware of the pleas made by their own subjects. God hears all who call upon Him, who trust and obey Him. In like manner is it with Satan who is charmed by magical ceremonies and invocations, "because by them God is dishonoured, and he magnified: therefore, if God outte him not short, he is readie prest to assist such, as

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 415.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 417.

shall vse such ceremonies or inuocations."<sup>1</sup>

Not only was attention drawn to the mere reprobate, the non-elect, but it was drawn more forcefully to the ardent Satanic covenanter, the 'Magician' or those who practiced fortune-telling, foreseeing, and various other devilish arts. These receive their abilities through a covenant with Satan.<sup>2</sup> They are chosen by Satan to be His servants, and receive their powers either from another 'magician' or through books on the subject of 'magic'. So disturbing to the Cambridge theologian were these Satanic covenanters, that he was impelled to warn the Christian by exposing their arts.

Satanicall meanes I call those, which are vsed in the producing of such an effect, to the which they neither by any expresse rule out of Gods word, nor of their owne nature, were euer ordained. Such are obscure words, words of the Scripture wrested, and abused, to the great contumelie and disgrace of the Lord God; holy, or rather unholy water, sieues, seales, glasses, images, bowings of the knee, and such like diuers gestures.<sup>3</sup>

These wicked reprobates are greatly attracted by these works and believe that in the acts of the practitioner of magic there is a virtue by which wonders can be performed. So they join in the art with other practitioners, Satan being their companion to assist and "shew them diuerse triokes of his legerdemaine because he alone doth by meanes, voide of all such

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 39. "A Couenant with Satan is such a contract by which Magitians haue mutually to doe with the deuill."

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 39. Cf. infra, p. 231 f. for a further study of the servants of Satan.

vertue, effect that which his wicked instrument intendeth."<sup>1</sup>  
These 'magicians' are the instruments of Satan, leading the reprobates into the stronger obedience of the Wicked One.

The elect and the reprobate can easily be distinguished. The elect one believes that Christ is Savior of him personally. The reprobate believes that in some vague way Christ is Savior of some men. The reprobate fails to realize this salvation for himself, and thereby utterly fails in this life as well as the life to come.

The reprobate may be persuaded of the mercie and goodnes of God towards him for the present time in the which he feeles it: the elect is not onely persuaded of the mercies hee presently enjoyeth, but also he is persuaded of his eternall election before the foundation of the world, and of his euerlasting life, which yet hee doth not enjoy. .<sup>2</sup>

Both the elect and the reprobate can be enlightened to know the Word of God. However, the elect goes far beyond all the reprobate in this matter, having God to teach him, softening his 'stony heart' and thereby making him pliable. The Holy Ghost removes any scales from the eyes of the understanding, making it possible to conceive of the mysteries of God's Word.<sup>3</sup>

God's grace which is given to all men enables the reprobate to be like the Christian in outward appearance and action. He may, in fact, lead a life very close to the Christian. The

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 358.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 363.

reprobate has this consolation, that though he cannot attain salvation, his pains in Hell will be lessened.<sup>1</sup> He may even be a preacher of God's Word.

When as a reprobate professeth thus much of the Gospel, though indeed he be a goate, yet he is taken for one of Gods sheepe: his is kept in the same pastures, and is folded in the same folde with them. He is ocunted a Christian of the children of God, and so he taketh himselfe to be; no doubt because through the dulnesse of his heart, he cannot trie and examine himselfe, and therefore truely cannot discerne of his estate, whether hee be in Christ or not: and it may be thought that Satan is ready with some false perswasion to deceiue him . . .<sup>2</sup>

Ample warning was given to the Christians, then, to beware of Satan's servants lest the elect be caught unawares and be deceived, thereby keeping fellowship with those reprobates, which must not be.

#### V - DISPUTATION

The storm that raged over Peter Baro, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity,<sup>3</sup> stirred the Church of England to re-examine its doctrinal position. The Lambeth Articles were a result of this study. Also produced at about the same time was a treatise by William Perkins entitled A Christian and Plaine Treatise of the Manner and Order of Predestination and of the largnes of Gods Grace. This treatise coupled with The

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 358.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 359.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. supra, p. 27.

Golden Chaine, formed the basis of the birth of the Arminian controversy in England.<sup>1</sup> Professor Perry Miller portrays him as "one of the first to smell out the Arminian heresy . . ."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. James Arminius told of happening upon the pamphlet, The Manner and Order of Predestination, in a library. It was probably the Latin edition which had wide circulation on the Continent. He noticed that it was written by William Perkins. Knowing of Perkins through other treatises, he thought that it was worthy of purchase, and so did buy a copy. His intent was to give a thorough perusal of the treatise in order that he 'might try' William Perkins. He read and reread the booklet with as unprejudiced an eye as he could command. At length he could withhold his thoughts no longer and wrote an answer entitled:

Examen Modestum Libelli, Quem D. Gulielmus Perkinsius apprime doctus Theologus, edidit ante aliquot annos de Praedestinationis modo & ordine itemque de Amplitudine gratiae divinae.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately Dr. Arminius penned his answer in the year of Perkins' death.

William Perkins listed and discussed the four errors of the Arminians in his Golden Chaine. The first error is:

There is a certaine universall or generall election, whereby God, without any either restraint, or exception of persons, hath decreed to redeeme by Christ, and to reconcile

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<sup>1</sup> Dyer, G. History of the University and Colleges of Cambridge, (Longman, Hurst, et. al., 1814), I, p. 217.

<sup>2</sup> Miller, op. cit., p. 255.

<sup>3</sup> There is no evidence that Perkins held a doctor's degree.



unto himselfe all mankinde wholly, fallen in Adam, yea euery singular person, as well the Reprobate, as the Elect.<sup>1</sup>

This was answered by saying that the very term election indicates that God does not take everyone. If He took or accepted everyone, then He could not make choice of some only.

The second error indicated that God foreknew that Adam would fall, but He did not by His eternal decree foreordain that he would fall. Therefore, Adam's sin was without the agent permission of God.<sup>2</sup> Perkins refuted this claim by pointing to nature, that nothing happens or comes to pass except by the will or decree of God. Adam's sin was then by God's active or operative permission.<sup>3</sup>

The third error was that "God by reason that he did foresee disobedience of some, or, that they would condemne the Gospell, did decree their destruction and condemnation."<sup>4</sup> The Cambridge theologian confuted this idea by reminding the reader that the Gentiles always had the light of nature, but by the very fact that they extinguished that light through their wickedness, they could not obey God nor their consciences, (Romans 1. 18). Furthermore, if the decree of election is the faith of a believer foreseen, then lack of faith foreseen should not be

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 110; i.e. God was not the causal factor in Adam's fall.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. supra, pp. 106-107.

<sup>4</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 110.

the cause of the decree of reprobation.

The fourth error, "Gods calling to the knowledge of the Gospell, is universall, yea, of all men, and euery singular person, without exception,"<sup>1</sup> was declared to be a very unreasonable position. God would not have all men come to Christ. Scripture indicates that many were called but few are chosen.<sup>2</sup> Perkins called attention to many, not all. Then, to support his view further, he recalled that a great portion of the world has never heard of Christ, and the greatest part of the world has been outside of the Covenant of Grace.

Perkins concluded,

If we should graunt this doctrine to be true, then must we needes allow of these absurdities in diuinity, which follow. I. That God would haue all, and each singular man to be saued: & withall he would haue some ordained to hatred and perdition: or, That in regard of God, all men are elected, & redeemed, but in regard of the euent many perish. II. The guilt of Adams sin must not be imputed to any one of his posterity, because that God, hauing mercie of all generally in Christ, did take into the couenant of reconciliation all mankind. Now if but the guiltinesse of Adams fall be taken away, the punishment forthwith ceaseth to be a punishment, and corruption it selfe is by litle and litle abolished in all men.<sup>3</sup>

The Golden Chaine was supplemented with the Treatise on The Order and Mode of Predestination. In the Epistle to the Reader, Perkins listed ten propositions upon which he estab-

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 111.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 111-112.

lished his doctrine of predestination. Arminius objected to the eighth which read,

The will of GOD is knowne, not only by the written word, or by revelation, but also by the event. For that which commeth to passe, doth therfore come to passe, because God hath willed that it should come to passe.<sup>1</sup>

Arminius took the opposite position, that the event does not indicate that God has willed anything. He may have willed the event, or He may have been unwilling to hinder the event which He foresaw was going to take place. Unless this position is held, thought Arminius, the distinction between God's permission and God's action is eliminated.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Arminius found all these ten propositions or axioms on the whole to be evident in nature and quite unnecessary to William Perkins' thesis. Van Baarsel sides with Arminius in criticism of Perkins' axioms, indicating that Perkins' order of salvation is that which is gotten out of the order of nature. The light of nature hardens people's hearts, said Van Baarsel.<sup>3</sup>

The Cambridge theologian's definition of predestination<sup>4</sup> was acceptable in a sense, but Arminius believed that it was one which could not be substantiated through Scripture. He

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit. II, p. 605.

<sup>2</sup> Arminius, James, Works, trans. William Nichols (Thomas Baker, London, 1875), III, p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> Van Baarsel, op. cit., p. 163.

<sup>4</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 606. "Predestination is the counsell of God touching the last end or estate of man out of this temporall or naturall life. For as touching naturall life . . . this kinde of life is in the counsell of God onely a preparation . . . vnto the spirituall and heauenly life."

believed that the predestination mentioned in Scripture is found in Jesus Christ, relating to the blessings of the spiritual life and not to the natural life. The spiritual blessings are communicated in part in the natural life. Illustrating from the Apostle Paul, Arminius showed that though in the natural life we are partakers of the spiritual gifts, it is by those gifts that we are living a spiritual life.<sup>1</sup>

He further believed that William Perkins was making God the Author of Sin in saying that God's general will

. . . is in the decree of God, whereby hee willeth something, not in respect of approbation and effecting of it by himselfe, but only in respect of suffering it to be done by others. And here the thing which is to be done, doth not depend vpon Gods will, but only vpon the will of the creature which falleth away: and with this will we say that God willeth the fall of Adam, yet not simply, but onely that it should come to passe.<sup>2</sup>

Arminius was greatly disturbed by Perkins' distinction between the Fall and the event of the Fall. He indicated that it is a theological axiom that God is not the cause of Adam's Fall. On the other hand, it is possible to make God the Author of sin not only by affirmative acts, but also by negative acts.

Affirmative acts you do, indeed, remove from Him; to wit, the inclination of the mind to sinning, the infusion of perverseness, and the withdrawal of the gift already conferred. But you do attribute to Him a negative act, - the denial or non-bestowal of confirming grace; which confirming grace, if it were necessary to the avoidance of sin, then by that act of denial God was the cause of sin and of

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<sup>1</sup> Arminius, op. cit., III, pp. 274-275.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 613. Cf. supra, pp. 106-107.

Adam's fall.

Arminius was nearer to the Schoolmen than was the Cambridge theologian regarding the problem of sin. He agreed that God is the Author of the acts of His creatures. However, he insisted on the elements of free will in Man, or the guilt of sin is placed upon God as a result.

He inferred that God permits certain things to happen. Describing this, he wrote:

. . . an act of the Divine will, whereby God suspends any efficiency possible to Him, whether right or by ability, or in both ways; which efficiency, if it were made use of by God, would either circumscribe or actually prevent a certain act of the rational creature, for the performance of which act the same creature has inclination and strength sufficient. But, since the will of God is always directed by His wisdom, and tends toward good, that permission cannot be ordained by Him except to a certain end, and that the best.<sup>2</sup>

James Arminius found it expedient to divide God's permission into two types or parts. The first, God does not compel Man to act in any given way by law, but leaves it entirely to his free choice and liberty. In the second place, God does not put a "hindrance to any act by His own action."<sup>3</sup> He indicated that 'hindrance' referred to that by which the act of Man would definitely be impeded, not by which it ought or can be impeded. In brief, the application of this doctrine of God's

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<sup>1</sup> Arminius, op. cit., III, p. 291.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 390.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 391.

permission is obvious, that Adam had free choice in Eden.

This doctrine eliminates the problem of God's Authorship of Sin, but puts in peril the Calvinistic concept of the Sovereignty of God that William Perkins was so determined to defend. It placed in Man an unwarranted privilege to determine his own course and destiny, Perkins would say. Furthermore, the very fact that God is a personal God and Creator avers that He has control over His creation, including Man. This was affirmed by Perkins in these words:

Moreouer, euery man (as Paul auerreth) is vnto God, as a lumpe of clay in the potters hand: and therefore God according to his supreme authoritie doth make vessels of wrath, he doth not finde them made.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of sin is brought forth in the Augustinian concept of double predestination to which Perkins adhered. He maintained the election of some men to salvation and others to damnation.<sup>2</sup> The election to salvation is by supernatural grace, or the special grace of God. Both Augustine and Perkins made the differentiation between natural and supernatural grace.

Naturall grace is that, which is bestowed on man together with nature: and this is either of nature perfect or corrupt. Perfect, as the Image of God, or righteousness bestowed on Adam in his creation. This grace belongeth generally vnto all, because we all were in Adam: and whatsoever hee receiued that was good, hee receiued it both for himselfe and his posterity. The grace of nature corrupted, is a naturall

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 610.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. supra, p. 107 ff., for a fuller study of Perkins on predestination and its implications.

inlightning . . . yea and euery naturall gift. And these gifts truly by that order which God hath made in nature, are due and belonging vnto nature.<sup>1</sup>

Arminius was not satisfied with Perkins' convictions on natural grace, feeling that he did not go far enough. The famous Dutchman regarded natural grace as an integral part of the saving process. Anything short of that, which does not minister to the salvation of men, is a contradiction of terms.

For the grace which was prepared by election or predestination, is the grace of remission of sins, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit: and the glory which God has prepared by the ignominy to which man was exposed by sin. Reprobation, too, is the denial of that grace, and the preparation of the punishment due to sin, not<sup>2</sup> as it is due, but as it is not to be taken away by mercy.

At this point of final separation between the two theologians, Perkins maintained that supernatural grace is not a grace received from nature, nor is it a result of nature, especially nature in the corrupt state. Supernatural grace is "bestowed by speciall grace, and therefore is speciall."<sup>3</sup> Augustine affirmed this belief when he wrote, "Nature is common to all, but not grace."

James Arminius believed that he was in accord with this famous Church Father in making the distinction between sufficient grace and efficacious grace. Sufficient grace is that

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 626.

<sup>2</sup> Arminius, op. cit., III, p. 292.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 626.

whereby a man can believe and repent. Efficacious grace is that grace whereby a man may not only choose to repent and believe, but it is an assurance that he will repent and believe without any shadow of doubt. Each of these graces is sufficient for salvation, and they are the two parts of a two-fold suasion of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> When a sinner falls, efficacious grace is lacking. Therefore, when Christ died, He died for the reprobate as well as the elect. His death could be as efficacious for those who reject Him, because the door is always open for repentance.

The charge of crypto-Romanism, which was leveled against the Arminians of a later date, evidently had its foundation in the latter part of this answer to Perkins. A period of time had elapsed between the penning of the first portion of the discussion, and the portion wherein Arminius re-examined the concept of grace in the light of the Roman Catholic Cardinals Bellarmine and Contarini. Here again he referred to the differentiation between sufficient and efficacious grace. Perhaps he received the concept from Bellarmine, for Arminius made reference to the Cardinal's writings as support for his point of view. Bellarmine ridiculed the position of Perkins in reference to the verse in the Apocalypse, "Behold, I stand at

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<sup>1</sup> Arminius, op. cit., III, pp. 315-316.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 438.



the door and knock."<sup>1</sup> Arminius quoted Bellarmine as saying that it would be foolish for Christ to stand at the door and knock if there is no one within who can open the door. Somewhat in glee, the Dutch theologian wrote,

Your answer, O Perkins, does not combat Bellarmine: for neither does he wish to conclude therefrom the universality of grace, but that there is a 'certain sufficient grace,' which you do not contradict.<sup>2</sup>

The harmony of Arminius with the Romanists did not draw to a close at this point. The Dutch thinker proceeded to defend the Romanists against the charges of Perkins. Arminius stated that God foresaw the sin of men, and was thereby stimulated to prepare Christ as Redeemer; and that God provided sufficient grace for all men to be saved through Christ in anticipation of Him and His merits. God therefore willed that all men should be saved. He, then, predestined those whom He foresaw would die in His favor. Those whom He foresaw who would condemn themselves either for original or actual sin, would consequently be rejected by God.<sup>3</sup> Arminius' defence for this position was Augustine. The Dutch thinker believed that there was a harmony between Augustine and the Romanist position at this point.

Perkins' criticism was based upon his staunch Calvinistic

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 3. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Arminius, op. cit., III, p. 481.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 640.

foundation that God did not reveal Jesus Christ to each and every man. Arminius, on the other hand, declared that such a belief was a disservice in building up the doctrine of predestination and grace, especially as Perkins attempted to establish it. The reasons that Arminius set down are perhaps the most revolting to even a twentieth century Calvinist, whose views have not only been molded by the doctrine established by the great Swiss Reformer, but also by the pressure of historical and sociological events since the Reformation. The Dutch theologian's reasons were: that infants who die outside of the grace of God do so because they themselves have sinned against God and the grace of the Gospel through their parents. In the second place, though these infants and their parents are destitute of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, they still are given some truth as to His power and goodness before death. God has preserved the Law and engraved it on their minds. If they had rightly used these benefits, God's grace would have been granted to them.<sup>1</sup>

This seemed to have been an extraordinary way of removing the problem of sin from the hand of God. Likewise, it was an argument that Perkins could hardly have anticipated, particularly from Arminius or one of his followers. No doubt the Cambridge theologian would have been shocked to learn of Arminius' defence

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<sup>1</sup> Arminius, op. cit., III, p. 483. Cf. Van Baarsel, op. cit., p. 159.

of Bellarmine and Gasparo Contarini, especially at the time when the fever of anti-Romanism was so strong in England and on the Continent.

Much of Arminius' reasoning is none too convincing, and perhaps would have deterred William Perkins very little had he had the privilege and opportunity of studying this work of Arminius. The Dutch theologian was a stricter controversialist than Perkins, and was more than once exasperated at the trend of Perkins' reasoning. On one occasion, he made his impatience felt when he wrote, "I see, O Perkins, that you have written those things with a flowing pen and without examination of the syllogism, as it has been propounded by you."<sup>1</sup>

Arminius was the slave to logic and brought it to the extremes in order to prove his argument. Perkins had the better and clearer presentation, and understood the dangers of pressing an argument too far, a danger which Arminius did not heed.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps this was a vulnerable place in Perkins' thinking. However, he seemed to have a greater tone of compassion for his fellowmen by not extending his argument. He avoided fatalism, and yet gave God His place in men's thinking. Though he thought continually from the side of the Eternal,<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Arminius, *op. cit.*, III, p. 438.

<sup>2</sup> This is evidenced by Arminius' discussions with Junius.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Van Baarsel, *op. cit.*, p. 160. Van Baarsel criticized Perkins because the Cambridge theologian dealt with predestination only from God's side. It has something to do with this life, thought Van Baarsel.

it did not harden him toward his brethren. He sought the salvation of all men continually. Though he believed staunchly in election, as we have seen, his passion for conversions was so great that it seemed as though each person's salvation was dependent upon his imparting of God's Word to them. He refused to make a judgment as to whether a man was saved or lost. Instead, he culled from Scripture a measure or gauge whereby each individual could judge for himself his own relationship to God.

There are obvious instances of inconsistencies in the writings of both men. These serve mainly to show to the modern reader that both men were bona fide seekers for the truth of God through His Word. In spite of these faults and failures, they have enabled modern thinkers to construct a stable theology for our time that cannot be destroyed by foreign ideologies.

After Perkins died, his defence was taken up by an able young man, Joannes Maccovius of the University of Franeker. Evidently theologians in this University were quite taken with the presentation of Perkins, for when William Ames found it expedient to leave England, he was welcomed as professor in that University.

John Higgins, an Oxford poet, published in the year of Perkins' death, a short octavo treatise entitled An Answer to Master William Perkins, Concerning Christs Descension into Hell. This was the least of the disputes with the works of Perkins,

and was perhaps the only one for which he could have published a rebuttal.

John Higgins had read the popular treatise by Perkins on the Apostles' Creed. It no doubt aroused his ire, especially to think that the Cambridge theologian dared to contradict the accepted tradition as to Christ's descent into Hell. At about the same time two others had a similar controversy, Henry Jacob and Bishop Bilson of Winchester. These two controversies gave further evidence of the beginnings of theological differences between the two groups within the Church of England, the Puritans and the traditionalists or Anglicans.<sup>1</sup> Perkins played a major part in these differences, being one of the first doctrinal Puritans.

Both Perkins and Higgins agreed that Christ descended into Hell. The question seemed to revolve around what was meant by the statement in the Creed. Perkins had previously said that we must not think that Christ descended locally into the place of the damned, but that for the period He was in the grave, He was "vnder the ignominious dominion of death. Act. 2. 24."<sup>2</sup> It was necessary that Christ should be captivated by death in order that He could abolish the sting which is the power of death.

The traditional belief was that after Christ was crucif-

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<sup>1</sup> Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., p. 370.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 29.

ied, He made a physical tour of the netherworld. First, He endured its pains as part of His suffering. Then to the surprise of Satan, He left the underworld, announcing His triumph over death and its Adversary.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin had digressed from the traditional concept when he spiritualized Christ's descent, likening it to the sufferings of Christ on the Cross. "Hence there is nothing strange in its being said that he descended to hell, seeing he endured the death which is inflicted on the wicked by an angry God."<sup>2</sup> His interpretation admittedly had the problem of placing an event that happened after the death of Christ, before His death. Calvin defended his position, that Christ's descent was symbolized in His sufferings and death.

But after explaining what Christ endured in the sight of man, the Creed appropriately adds the invisible and incomprehensible judgment which he endured before God, to teach us that not only was the body of Christ given up as the price of redemption, but that there was a greater and more excellent price - that he bore in his sole the tortures of condemned and ruined man.<sup>3</sup>

Perkins' explanation was somewhat similar. He also based his interpretation on the spiritual aspects of the phrase, He descended into Hell. He did not think that the words should be eliminated from the Creed just because they are lacking in many of the great Christian Creeds, because some have said that

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<sup>1</sup> Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., p. 370.

<sup>2</sup> Calvin, op. cit., I, p. 443.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 443.

the words crept in through neglect, or that they are not found in the Roman Church, nor used by the Eastern churches.<sup>1</sup> John Higgins argued that the phrase is essential to the Creed. He answered Perkins' speculations historically, but in the final analysis he resorted to the Word of God, showing that the words were consistent with both the Old and New Testaments.

William Perkins discounted the traditional view of the descent much to the chagrine of Higgins who protested,

Christ descended into hell, that is, Christ in his humane Soule after his death, did really and locally, actually, and effectually descend into hell where the wicked are tormented. This is a true exposition.

Perkins agreed that Calvin's interpretation "is good and true, . . . Yet neuerthelesse it seemes not so fitly to agree with the order of the former articles."<sup>3</sup> Instead, he proposed that it referred to Christ's being held captive in the grave and was in bondage to death the three days. This seemed most fitting to Scripture, showing the degrees of Christ's humiliation. First, He was crucified and died. Second, He was buried. Third, He lay in the grave under the captivity and bondage of death. These three degrees of humiliation are comparable to the three degrees of His exaltation, His resurrection, ascension, and glorification. The third degree of exaltation,

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> Higgins, John, An Answer to Master William Perkins, Concerning Christs Descension into Hell, (Joseph Barnes, Oxford, 1602), p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 233.

His sitting at the right hand of God, answers the third degree of His humiliation, His descent.

This argument was supported by the contention that ψυχή signified not only the soul, but also the whole person. Higgins objected, saying that it doesn't necessarily refer to the whole person. Perkins again said that ᾠδὴ means the grave. Here again Higgins protested, contending that it is not so in the passage referring to the rich man who went down to Hell.<sup>1</sup>

Perkins' view was supported by William Ames who also proposed the same idea in his discussion of Christology.

The continuance [of death][sic] was the remaining under the domination of death by the space of three dayes, Acts 2. 24. This state is wont properly to bee set forth by the descending into Hell.

Christ being buried three dayes, was a witnesse and certaine representation of this state.<sup>2</sup>

Ames did not elaborate on this statement. It may have been that by the time he recorded his theology, it was the more accepted view, at least among the nonconformists.

It must be realized that the view was not new with Perkins. It was evidently the next step following Calvin's spiritualizing of this doctrine. William Perkins made mention that both Calvin's view and the one that he popularized, were the commonly accepted views, and that one may freely make choice between them, though

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<sup>1</sup> St. Luke 16. 22-23.

<sup>2</sup> Ames, op. cit., p. 91.



the view he held seemed to him to be consonant with the words of the Creed.<sup>1</sup>

In close examination of Perkins' theological system, it is evident that he was not a great original thinker. Much of what he proposed was passed on to him by the preceding reformers. His contribution was, that he made the depths of theological thought understandable to the simplest as well as the more profound thinkers.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 233.

## CHAPTER V

### THEOLOGY - ETHICS

A perusal of the factors giving rise to the Reformation indicates that an overemphasis and a separation of Roman Catholic dogma and morality were contributing causes for the division of the Christian Church.<sup>1</sup> A new creed was needed, but a new code of conduct was a greater necessity. John Calvin laid the foundation for the new code, and attempted to fill the moral vacuum left by the Reformation. Various systems of casuistry were promulgated by Protestants, but not until the close of the sixteenth century was an attempt made to fully systematize Christian conduct.

Though the Reformation had eradicated to a great extent medieval monasticism and other ascetic practices of Romanism, Protestantism failed to consider asceticism as it existed in the colleges and universities. One might say, then, that the universities possessed the remaining vestige of medieval piety. In England, conduct was strictly regulated in the colleges. The students were carefully shielded from the outside world insofar as it was possible. Mullinger compared this conduct to the schools on the Continent, which were similarly affected by asceticism.

The College system, again, however much it might tend to lessen the efficiency and popularity of the schools, was undoubtedly favourable to the enforcement of a stricter discipline; and severe as are the censures of contemporary critics on the

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<sup>1</sup> Thompson, J. M., Lectures on Foreign History, 1494-1789, (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1944), p. 120.

follies, faults, and vices of the undergraduate body, and even of the bachelor of arts, at Cambridge, the indictment they involve stands in almost bright relief when compared with the strictures pronounced by academic authorities themselves on the youth in the schools of Protestantism abroad.<sup>1</sup>

These institutions have been described as ". . . semi-monastic organizations, . . . in which university students had long enjoyed what amounted to clerical status."<sup>2</sup> The universities of the time were then the link with the old order of pietistic living.

It was in such an atmosphere that William Perkins lived at Cambridge University, and it was from such an atmosphere that he revolted in his youth.<sup>3</sup> When he had passed beyond his conversion experience and had opportunity for reflection, and perhaps watched young students following the pathway to degradation he had once known and trod, he probably realized that the demands of conduct made upon college youths were made without the corresponding understanding of the reasons for the demands. It led him to muse once again that God requires not only an absolute commitment of the souls of men, but also demands that the allegiance be reflected in the Christian life and conduct. Beliefs must have practical application or they are useless. Doctrine that is not borne out in action ceases to be legitimate doctrine, and vice versa. It was Perkins' way of applying Jesus

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<sup>1</sup> Mullinger, J. Bass, The University of Cambridge from 1535 to . . . Charles the First, (The University Press, Cambridge, 1884), II, p. 433.

<sup>2</sup> Knappen, M. M., Tudor Puritanism, (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1938), p. 425.

<sup>3</sup> Supra, p. 33.

Christ to the life of the individual believer. He saw no purpose in separating theology and ethics.

One interested student of Elizabethan Puritanism has reflected on his studies of William Perkins.

His reputation as a theological writer in the half century that followed him was based to a large extent on his contributions to Puritan casuistry. Before his time, English Protestants had felt the lack of works, from their own divines, solving questions concerning cases of conscience. As William Ames was to say, they had been compelled to go to the Philistines' forges to sharpen their tools, and they were distressed that the papists had so far surpassed them in the resolution of consciences. Therefore, when the lecturer of Great St. Andrews began to preach sermons that could be collected and expanded into a systematic body of practical theology, his Calvinistic brethren called down blessings on his head.<sup>1</sup>

This was a unique departure for a Protestant in England. Late in his life he made the first attempt at systematizing how Christians should act. Heinrich Heppé indicated that Protestant pietism had its foundations in the influence of William Whitaker, Anthony Wood, and Richard Sibbes, but that William Perkins was the first real pietist, or the " . . . eigentliche Vater des Pietismus."<sup>2</sup>

The extent of the new departure can be realized by the

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, Louis B., "William Perkins, Elizabethan Apostle of 'Practical Divinity'", Huntington Library Quarterly, (San Marino, California, Vol. III, No. 2, January 1940), p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> Heppé, H., Geschichte des Pietismus und der Mystik in der Reformierten Kirche, (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1879), p. 24. The "true father of pietism." Cf. ibid., pp. 24-28. Cf. also Lang, D. August, Puritanismus und Pietismus, (Neukirchen, 1941), pp. 101-131. Note also, Perkins was 20 years older than Sibbes.

titles of some of Perkins' treatises: Cases of Conscience, A Direction for the Governement of the Tongue, A Treatise How to Live Well in all Estates and Times, and A Discourse of Conscience. It will become increasingly evident in this chapter that though he was instrumental in introducing a new science to the Protestant Christian, the science of casuistry, the extreme asceticism so often attributed to Puritanism will rarely be evident.<sup>1</sup> Determined as he was to refrain from controversy and from involvement in affairs of State, he found it quite convenient to hold to a middle position toward all extremes of Christian living.

The most noted of these treatises on casuistry was The Whole Treatise of the Cases of Conscience. The general purpose in Perkins' mind when he wrote it can be observed by the Biblical ascription on the title page, "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sinne."<sup>2</sup> Obviously, this was the first of a great series of treatises on Cases of Conscience by noted Puritans. These treatises flowed from printing presses for nearly a century, to the days of Richard Baxter. In all of Perkins' treatises on the subject, he

. . . formulated for Englishmen the most extensive statement they had yet seen of the relation of religion to the material aspects of life. Not until the publication of A Christian

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, op. cit., pp. 193-194. "To seventeenth-century men of God, casuistry had not taken on the sinister connotation given it by Pascal; to them it was simply the science of 'applied morality on some generalized system,' and usually took the form of answers to questions of conscience. Perkins' contribution to casuistry was in teaching his countrymen how to apply scriptural dicta to the solution of the infinite problem of everyday ethics. Realism and common sense saved him from the extreme worship of the letter of biblical law . . ."

<sup>2</sup> Romans 14. 23.

Directory by Richard Baxter, in 1673, was there a fuller elucidation of middle-class morality. Perkins was a spiritual ancestor of Baxter, and from him Baxter drew inspiration and suggestions, as he acknowledged.<sup>1</sup>

Perkins' contribution possessed a different spirit than Roman Catholic morality which set down rules of allowance by the Church. He set forth his cases of conscience with the main desire of establishing and clarifying for the English people exactly what is profitable for salvation. These treatises were the most effective answer to the misunderstanding of Dr. William Bishop, a Roman Catholic controversialist.<sup>2</sup>

## I - THE DOCTRINE OF CONSCIENCE

A Discourse of Conscience sets forth William Perkins' doctrine of conscience in four sections: the nature of conscience, its function, distinctions in conscience, and the task of a man concerning his conscience. Conscience was defined as a "part of the vnderstanding in al reasonable creatures, determining of their particular actions, either with them or against them."<sup>3</sup> When God created the soul, He placed in it two principal faculties, the understanding and the will. The understanding is that part of the soul whereby Man is able to make use of reason. It is also that part which serves to rule and order the whole of a man's life. Will, the other faculty of

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop, William, A Reformation of a Catholike Deformed, (no pub., no pl., 1604?), p. 82. Cf. supra, p. 80 f.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, William, Workes, (John Legatt, London, 1612), I, p. 517.

the soul, is that whereby Man is able to choose what he is to do. There are other states that are united with Will. For example, there are joy, sorrow, love, hatred, and others which enable us to choose between good and evil. Since conscience has no relation to these states and the faculty of Will to which these states are united, he felt justified in placing conscience in the understanding, "because the actions thereof stand in the use of reason."<sup>1</sup>

Conscience is a part of the understanding, because the Scriptures affirm that there are many actions in conscience as accusing, excusing, comforting, and terrifying, "which actions could not thence proceed, if conscience were no more but an action or act of the mind."<sup>2</sup> In contrast, certain of the Schoolmen, Dun Scotus and Giovanni Bonaventura, made conscience to be a habit, not an act of the faculty of the understanding. Dr. William Ames weighed the two positions. He rejected that of the Schoolmen in part, because they failed to go far enough when they said that the central property in conscience is habit. Ames believed that there are other operations in conscience, the ability to accuse and to comfort. On the other hand, he could hardly agree with Perkins that conscience is a faculty of the understanding, nor could he agree with the support that Perkins found in the Word of God.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 517. Both Perkins and Ames divided understanding into theoretical and practical.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 517.

. . . this reason is weak: because in the Scriptures such kindes of effects are attributed to the thoughts themselves, which undoubtedly are acts. Rom. 2.15. Their thoughts accusing one another, or Excusing. The reason is, because things done, are the effects not onely of the Mover, but also of the motion it selfe. Besides, Master Perkins maketh Conscience, Vnderstanding, Opinion, Knowledge, Faith, and Prudence, to be of one kind or sort; but none would define these so, as that they should be taken for distinct faculties of the soule.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, Ames followed William Perkins in placing conscience in the Judgment or Reason instead of the Will. "Conscience doth alwaies suppose an assent that is firme and settled."<sup>2</sup>

Conscience can be mistaken for a certain knowledge in the minds of men, but Perkins was quick to perceive that the knowledge was the result of a natural power in the soul,

the propertie whereof is to take the principles and conclusions of the minde and apply them, and by applying either to accuse or excuse. This is the ground of all, and this I take to be conscience.<sup>3</sup>

There may be some argument that conscience is not a natural power because it may be lost. He observed that if this occurred, it is only the use of the conscience that is in reality lost, just as the use of reason is lost in a drunken man. Therefore, conscience is present in all humans, that is, 'all reasonable creatures', to determine things to be done or to judge whether they were done well, poorly, or indifferently.

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<sup>1</sup> Ames, William, The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, (Edward Griffin, London, n. d.), p. 2. "Of Conscience and the Cases Thereof."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 2. Of Conscience and the Cases Thereof.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 517.



What is the function of conscience? Conscience particularly determines Man's own actions. It tells him whether they are good or bad. When one compares his actions to those of another person or observes what another has said or done, the comparing and observing are not in the realm of conscience, but in that of knowledge. Again, conscience deals not in general acts but in particular actions, "and that not in some few, but in all."<sup>1</sup> This is the main aim of conscience.

Even the derivation of the word conscience was used to substantiate this doctrine. The word, scire, to know, refers to that which is known by a single man alone. Consoire indicates that at least two people know something that is secret, both of them sharing this particular knowledge. Hence, there is the term conscientia or συνείδησις. "Conscience is that thing that combines two together, and makes them partners in the knowledge of one and the same secret."<sup>2</sup>

There is no one who can combine with Man in sharing a secret of this nature except God. Therefore, God knows perfectly all the thoughts and acts of each man no matter how much he may try to conceal them. In the same sense Man knows together with God the same things concerning himself. His study of the term consoientia was comparable to that made by John Calvin.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 517.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 518.

<sup>3</sup> Calvin, John, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. Henry Beveridge, (James Clarke & Co., London, 1949), II, p. 141.

Comparing Perkins' views on conscience with those held by the Continental thinkers, it is evident that at this point he displayed a sense of originality. Perhaps some thoughts he used in formulating his views on conscience may have been defined before his day. If they were, it is certain that they were not widely accepted until he popularized them. Even then, Perkins' approach to the nature of conscience failed to gain wide approval, probably because his presentation did not clarify the concepts of the Schoolmen and the earlier Reformers. As a result, William Ames clung to the distinctions of the Scholastics. It could then be said that Perkins failed to affect the concept of the nature of the ethical life.

The duties of conscience are two-fold: to give testimony or to give judgment. Conscience testifies that a thing was or was not done. However, before proceeding further, he felt obliged to consider three things: what it is to which conscience bears witness, the manner of the witness, and how long is the witness made. Conscience bears witness to our thoughts, our affections, and to our outward actions. The manner of the witness is noted in two ways. Conscience bears witness of everything that we do, and then secretly and inwardly tells us of them. As to the length of witness, conscience bears witness continually, forever. When a man dies, his conscience lives on,

when the body is rotten in the graue, conscience liueth & is safe and sound: and when we shall rise againe, conscience shall come with vs to the barre of Gods iudgement, either to accuse or excuse vs before God.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 518.

The first function of conscience teaches us three things. the first is that our conscience witnesses to the fact that there is a God. Though atheists may protest as long as they wish to the truth of this statement, this disbeliever still has within him that which permits him to will or not to will, and that which will convince him of the truth of the Godhead as well. We also learn that God watches over all men with a special providence.

. . . Gods care to man is manifest in this, that when hee created man and placed him in the world hee gaue him conscience to be his keeper, to follow him alwaies at his heeles, and to dogge him (as wee say) and to prie into his actions, and to beare witness of them all.<sup>1</sup>

Not only are we able to observe through the testimony of our conscience that God cares for men, but we can also observe His goodness and love that is extended to men. If one does anything that is unseemly or amiss in the sight of God, He indicates through the conscience, secretly telling the individual of the wrong. If the wrong is amended, God then forgives. If it is not corrected, then later the conscience may openly accuse him of the sin before the judgment bar of God.

The second function of conscience, that of giving judgment on whether a thing is well done or not, is compared to 'a small God' sitting in the center of men's hearts convicting and giving judgment in this life and preparing for the time when they shall receive judgment before God in the Great Day of Judgment.

"Wherefore the temporarie iudgment that is giuen by the conscience is nothing els but a beginning, or a forerunner of the last

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 518.

iudgment."<sup>1</sup> This fact is a solemn warning that we are to take special heed that nothing in the past lay upon our hearts accusing us, "and that we charge not our conscience in the time to come with any matter."<sup>2</sup> If our conscience should condemn us, God will condemn us much more.

The cause which makes conscience to judge is that which has power over the conscience to order it, that is, to determine what will or will not be done. The cause is termed the binder, and is classified as proper or improper. The proper binder is that which has absolute or sovereign power in itself to bind conscience. The only proper binder is the Word of God comprising the Old and New Testaments.<sup>3</sup> The improper binder has no power or inherent authority. It receives authority only by the virtue of the Word of God. The improper binder is composed of human laws, oaths, and promises.

Human laws include both civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The Roman Church maintained

that Ciuill and Ecclesiasticall iurisdiction haue a coactiue power in the conscience, and that the lawes made thereby doe as truly & properly binde (as they speake) to mortall and veniall sinne, as Gods law it selfe.<sup>4</sup>

William Perkins agreed it appears that necessary obedience is to be performed to both civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 519.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 519.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 525.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 525.

However, he discounted that civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions have a constraining power to bind conscience in a way that the laws of God do.<sup>1</sup> The popular Protestant view set down the means whereby the laws of men bind conscience.

Wholesome lawes of men, made of things indifferent, so farreforth bind conscience by vertue of the generall commandement of God, which ordaineth the Magistrates authoritie: that whosoever shall wittingly and willingly, with a disloyall minde, either break or omit such lawes, is guiltie of sin before God.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, Man's law binds only by the authority of God's Law. In reality it is God's Law that does the binding, working through human jurisdiction. A man may do something which is outside human laws and constitutions without a breach of his conscience. If he is able to omit the doing of any law without hindering or thwarting the purpose of the law, without giving offence, and without contempt for the establisher of the law, then the man does not sin. This truth stands certain not only in the law of Man, but also in the Law of God. It was illustrated by David's act of eating the 'shewbread' in the temple, done without sin even though he was not a priest.<sup>3</sup>

Civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction are applied through both civil and ecclesiastical laws. Civil laws are necessary in that they uphold the second table of the Decalogue. In particular, they prescribe what is to be done and to be left undone,

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 528.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 530.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 531.

as well as touch on civil and criminal items, and various other offices and agreements.

. . . yea they conclude, inioyne, and command not only such affaires as bee of small importance, but also things & actions of great waight, tending to maintaine the common peace, ciuill society, and the very state of the common wealth.<sup>1</sup>

These laws are binding. The breach of them would be a sin against God, even if these laws be broken without giving outward effect. This point was illustrated. A man by his poverty or covetous spirit, became an opposition to the law of the nation. His product was secretly given to others. There was no evident offence against anyone, nor was there open contempt toward the civil law. Yet this man sinned in that he had in some way hindered society and "robbed the soueraigne Prince of his right."<sup>2</sup>

Ecclesiastical laws are also necessary in certain circumstances in upholding the commandments of the first table of the Decalogue. It is so only in certain circumstances because all doctrine pertaining to the foundation and welfare of the Church, as well as the entire worship of God, is set down in the written Word of God. Doctrine receives its authority because of the written Word of God, and not because of the Church. Also, the creeds and confessions of particular denom-

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 531.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 531.

inations are in substance God's Word, and are binding by the Word alone.

The laws which the Church makes are decrees relating to the outward order in the administration of the Word of God, the sacraments, and the form of government and oversight of the meetings in the congregation. These laws are made in accordance with the general rules of the Word of God which requires that all things be done with decency and in order. Such decrees of the Church are required to be observed necessarily, and are binding on all men, in that the keeping of them maintains decent order and avoids open offence. On the other hand, if a law concerning some external rite or something indifferent be broken, and no offence is shown against the people, nor contempt displayed against ecclesiastical authority, no breach is made in the conscience.<sup>1</sup>

The second part of the improper binder, the oath, is either 'assertorie' by which one declares that something has or has not been done, and 'promissorie' by which a promise is made to do a given thing or not to do it. Assertory refers to the object, and promissory has reference to the act.

Scripture has set forth certain conditions that makes an oath to be lawfully binding by God's commandment.<sup>2</sup> "An oath

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<sup>1</sup> No doubt this belief was firmly lodged in the convictions of Perkins when he was called before the star-chamber. To have shown contempt for their judgment as others did, would have been a breach of his conscience. This would oppose the belief of some modern scholars who have inferred that Perkins betrayed his conscience by compromising with the authorities. Cf. *supra*, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, *op. cit.*, I, p. 532.

bindeth then, when it is made of things certaine and possible, in truth, iustice, and iudgment, for the glory of God and the good of our neighbor."<sup>1</sup> It binds when there is a loss, or when hindrances occur, and even when one takes an oath when induced to do so by fraud and guile. There are six cases in which an oath does not bind: first, if the oath is definitely against the Word of God, it does not bind, for the power of binding is only found in the Word of God; second, it does not bind if the oath is against the wholesome laws of the country in which one lives, for God demands that we keep the good laws of men; third, if one does not have the rational faculty of understanding, such as young children and the mentally incapacitated, the oath does not bind; fourth, nor does it bind on those who have no power to pledge themselves; fifth, if it is beyond the power of man to make such an oath; sixth, "If at the first it were lawfull, and afterward by some means become either impossible or vnlawfull, it binds not conscience."<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, a lawful oath definitely binds the conscience. It behooves one to note the great reverence in which we should use the name of God, and to take an oath only with due care and consideration.

And by this we must be aduertised to take heed of customable swearing in our common talke, whether our oathes be great or small. Wee must thinke of an oath as a part of Gods worship: nay, the H. Ghost often puts it for the whole worship of

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 533. Cf. *ibid.*, II, p. 184; and *ibid.*, III, pp. 73-81, Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 534.



God . . ."1

The third part of the improper binder is the promise which is made either to God or to Man. If it is made to God, it is called a vow. If it is made to Man, it is a single promise. A vow is to be viewed in three ways. It is first a promise of moral obedience.<sup>2</sup> It is made, for example, in baptism and is continued in the Lord's Supper "as in the spirituall exercises of inuocation and repentance."<sup>3</sup> This type of vow binds every member of the Church. The two other ways refer to the Naz-  
arite vow of the Old Testament, and the vow in the New Testament relating to outward exercises such as fasting and alms-giving.

William Perkins warned his readers that in making a vow it must be agreeable to the Word of God, and it must not be against a man's 'general or peculiar' calling. It must be within a man's power to keep it, and it must not be against Christian liberty.

It must be so made and be so observed without any opinion of merit or worship of God to this end alone, that it may be a means to exercise and cherish repentance and inuocation, temperance, patience, & to shew forth thankfulness to God.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 534, Isaiah 19.18; Jeremiah 12.16

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Knappen, M. M., Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries, (American Soc. of Church History, Chicago, 1933), p. 8. He suggests the vow or covenant to God in Puritan experience is equivalent to the Roman Catholic medieval vow to the Church. Cf. Perkins, op. cit., II, pp. 241-242 for the illustration of this thought.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 534.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 535.

Therefore, a vow binds men's consciences by virtue of God's commandment.<sup>1</sup> It binds as long as the instigator of the vow is in force.<sup>2</sup>

The causes that give judgment have been reviewed, but to gain a full picture of conscience, one must realize how judgment is made. Conscience judges through the medium of a certain kind of reasoning which Perkins classified as a 'practical syllogism'.<sup>3</sup> The reasoning is brought about by judgment aided by the faculties of the mind and of the memory. Mind indicates what the law is, while memory gives evidence of the law.

The minde is the storehouse and keeper of all manner of rules and principles . . . Memory serves to bring to minde the particular actions which a man hath done or not done, that conscience may determine of them."<sup>4</sup>

The practical syllogism was illustrated by the conscience of a murderer.

Euery murtherer is cursed, saith the mind:  
Thou art a murtherer, saith conscience assisted by memorie:  
Ergo, Thou art cursed, saith conscience, and so giueth her sentence.<sup>5</sup>

He further argued that conscience gives judgment of things that are past or things that are to come. As to the things

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 535. Ecclesiastes 5.3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 535. "For example: A man desirous to practice sobriety and temperance, finds that drinking of wine is hurtfull vnto him: hereupon hee vows to God to drink no wine: now once made, binds him till the estate of his body alter, and he feesles no inconuenience in wine: but then it ceaseth to binde any longer."

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 535.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 535.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, p. 535.

that are past, judgment is given in two ways, either by accusing and condemning, or by excusing and absolving. Conscience gives judgment of things to come "by foretelling, & (as it were) saying inwardly in the heart, that the thing may be well done."<sup>1</sup> This sort of judgment aids us to see God's goodness to all men. For each person is a pilgrim through this world. ". . . our life is our journey: God also hath appointed our conscience to be our companion and guide, to shew vs what course we may take and what we may not."<sup>2</sup> In all that is done, it is conscience that bears the burden. Whatever is not of faith or of persuasion of the conscience, as found in the Word of God regardless as to how men may judge it, is sin. Ignorance of God's will and Word is no excuse. It behooves each one to seek to know God's Word,

. . . and daily to increase in it, that he may in all his affaires haue Gods lawes to be the men of his counsel . . . that he may giue heed to them as to the light shining in a darke place, . . . that he may say with Peter, when Christ commanded him to launch forth into the deepe, and to cast forth his net: Lord we haue beene all night, and haue catched nothing: yet in thy word will I let downe my nette.<sup>3</sup>

The third chapter of A Treatise of Conscience deals with the distinctions of conscience. A conscience can be either good or bad. A good conscience is that which in accordance with God's Word, excuses and comforts Man. A good conscience can be good either by creation or by rebirth. Adam, for example,

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 536.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 537.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 538. St. Luke 5.5.

had a good conscience by creation, because in the original state of innocency, the conscience only excused him. It did not accuse him of anything. Adam is the prime example of one who possessed a good conscience. Regeneration is needed now though, in order to attain a good conscience. A regenerate conscience.

. . . is that which being corrupted by nature, is renewed and purged by faith in the blood of Christ. For to the regenerating of the conscience, there is required a conversion or change; because by nature all mens consciences since the fall are euill, and none are good but by grace. The instrument seruing to make this change is faith.<sup>1</sup>

Van Baarsel criticized Perkins at this point. The Cambridge Christian had not indicated the relation of conscience to God. Therefore, since he did not give conscience to God, he had no right in ascribing conscience to Adam before the Fall. Perkins' description of the conscience as a natural power would indicate that it is created, and cannot come to Man after the Fall.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the problem can be clarified by examining the other extreme found in the thought of William Ames who followed Perkins' outline generally. Ames felt that it was a weak argument to say that Adam's conscience only excused him. Adam's conscience in the state of innocency still had the power to accuse if there had been the occasion. Ames, therefore, inferred that those who follow Perkins'

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 538.

<sup>2</sup> Van Baarsel, J. J., William Perkins, (H. P. De Swart & Zoon, 's Gravenhage, 1913), p. 188.

reasoning are at fault in not requiring conscience to ". . . excuse, absolve, and approve a man in what is well done; and accuse and condemne him, for what is evill." <sup>1</sup> Both aspects are required in a conscience that is 'honestly good'.

Perkins' position was the mean between the extremes. One cannot say that the mean is always the correct position or the one to follow. However, in this case, Perkins felt that to accuse would indicate a defect in conscience. He reminded the reader that it is a natural law that there is agreement and harmony between the parts and the whole in the state of perfection; ". . . but if the conscience should naturally accuse there should be a dissent and disagreement and division between the conscience and the man himself." <sup>2</sup> Though one may not altogether agree with Perkins' premise in this matter, it must be admitted that there is a clarity of thought and consistency in reasoning in the presentation of his argument.

The conscience that is good by regeneration has both Christian liberty and certainty of salvation. "Christian liberty is a spirituall and holy freedome purchased by Christ." <sup>3</sup> Christian liberty consists of freedom from the justification of the moral law, freedom from the rigor of the law, and freedom from the bond of the ceremonial law. All Christians may

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<sup>1</sup> Ames, op. cit., p. 34, Book I, Of Conscience.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 538. Perkins did not anticipate such an argument as Van Baarsel's.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 538. Cf. ibid., II, pp. 306-307 for definition; pp. 310-311 regarding Christian liberty and the Law; pp. 319-321 as to the practice of Christian liberty.

use freely without any scruples, all things that are 'indifferent' if the manner of their use be essentially good.

The bad conscience is one which is defiled, spoiled by Original Sin, and one which is troublesome and painful. This is evidenced by the sorrows and miseries that come upon us.<sup>1</sup> Though conscience may be termed evil, it is not entirely evil. It possesses a general goodness inasmuch as it is an instrument of God's justice. Evil conscience accuses a sinner before God if he is justly to be accused. Evil conscience, either dead or stirring, is in everyone who has come from Adam by natural generation. The dead conscience, though it can accuse, lies inactive or completely dead, accusing very little or not at all. The dead conscience can be in a numbed state, or a condition in which the conscience accuses only of major or grievous sins. The dead conscience can also be 'seared'. The seared conscience is ". . . in such persons as are become obstinate hereticks and notorious malefactours."<sup>2</sup> It is not a result of nature, but of the increase of the corrupt nature. The stirring conscience is that which either excuses or accuses. It is the active conscience.

The last important aspect of the doctrine of conscience is Man's task concerning conscience. Man's first duty is to strive for a good conscience. It does not come to Man by

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 549.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 550.

nature, only by grace.<sup>1</sup> The good conscience is the fruit of faith. As we begin to get the good conscience by faith, and when the conscience is reformed (that is, when it no longer accuses and terrifies us), it begins to excuse and to testify to us by the Holy Spirit that we are the children of God, and are pardoned of our guilt and sin. It is at this stage that we have certainty of salvation. He had said in another treatise, Of the Right Knowledge of Christ Crucified, that the passion of our Lord obliges us to be like Jesus Christ, holy as He is holy and in conformity to Him in the four virtues, Faith, Love, Meekness, and Humility.<sup>2</sup>

The second duty of Man regarding conscience is to keep a good conscience once he has it. This is done by avoiding the various immediments such as ignorance of God's Word, unguided emotion (as anger which may be directed against our neighbor), and worldly lusts (as the desire for wealth, honor, and pleasure). We can be preserved from these only by cherishing our saving faith whereby we are persuaded that we are reconciled with God through Christ, and by striving to maintain the righteousness of a good conscience which is in essence the doing of God's will in everything. We can be Christlike by resolving never to sin against Him in anything, to walk with God as Enoch did, and then to walk in our own 'peculiar callings', doing the

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 551.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 629.

duties of those callings wholly to God's glory, to the welfare of society, and the to edification of the Church.<sup>1</sup> Christianity is not the hearing of the Word of God and professing it outwardly while at the same time living in our sins and pampering our rebellious flesh. It is the showing of ourselves to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

## II - CASES OF CONSCIENCE

The Cases of Conscience is divided into three books. The first concerns Man and his spiritual condition. The second has reference to God and Man's relationship to Him. The third pertains to Man and his neighbor.<sup>3</sup> He began his first book with the 'Grounds' or preambles of the Cases in order that the applications of conscience may be better understood.

### A. Man

The first Ground is that personal confession of faults ought always to be practiced in the case of a troubled conscience. This is desirable because the problem that is troubling the conscience must be known in order to apply the

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 554. Cf. Van Baarsel, op. cit., pp. 188-189. Van Baarsel believes that Perkins was not clear in his presentation, for in one instance the Cambridge casuist maintained that conscience does not deal with general things, but only with particular acts of Man. In another place, Perkins indicated that conscience witnesses to the fact that we are children of God. Perhaps the Dutch theologian's difficulty arose from the fact that he found it difficult to reconcile the doctrinal and practical aspects of conscience.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 209.

<sup>3</sup> William Ames used the same division.



remedy.<sup>1</sup> However, he warned that confession is not an absolute necessity to salvation. Neither should the confession be of all sins in general, but only of the particular sin that is stinging the conscience. When one makes confession, it can be to anyone. He especially suggested that it was a safer policy to make the confession to a minister of the Gospel. At least, to whomever the confession is made, that person must be a man of trust, who will keep secret the things revealed to him.<sup>2</sup>

The second Ground relates to the degrees of goodness in reference to human thoughts and actions. It was convenient for him to divide goodness into two broad categories, created and uncreated goodness. "Created goodnesse, is that whereby the creature is made good; and it is nothing else, but the fruit of that goodnesse, that is essentially in God."<sup>3</sup> Created goodness is subdivided into general or natural goodness and special or moral goodness. General goodness refers to God's acceptation and approval of all His creation. Therefore, everything is essentially good by creation and ordination. ". . . euen the Diuell himselfe and his actions, as he is a substance, and as they are actions, hauing their being from

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 2. "Uncreated, is God himselfe, who neuer had beginning, and who is Goodnesse in it selfe, because his nature is absolutely and perfectly good, and because he is the author and worker thereof, in all things created."

God, are good."<sup>1</sup> Special goodness, which is an agreement with the eternal and unchangeable goodness of God, is revealed in the Moral Law, wherein God commands certain things to be done. These are morally good.

The third Ground touches on the degrees and differences of sin. First of all, it is necessary to define sin. Perhaps the more complete definition is:

Sinne, is the corruption, or rather deprivation of the first integritie. More plainly, it is a falling or turning from God, binding the offendour by the course of Gods iustice, to vnder goe the punishment.<sup>2</sup>

In the Cases of Conscience, sin is defined as lawlessness, or as ". . . an anomie, that is, a want of conformitie to the Law of God."<sup>3</sup> Sin is essentially a lack of goodness and uprightness in the nature and acts of men. The Scholastics have rightly said, "in sin there is nothing positive."<sup>4</sup>

Sin is composed of four parts: transgression, guilt, punishment, and the stain or blot,<sup>5</sup> and naturally has its beginnings in Man. Three principal foundations of sin in

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 18. Other definitions: ibid., I, p. 20. "Sin is not a corruption of mans substance, but onely of faculties otherwise neither could mens soules be immortall nor Christ take vpon him mans nature." Cf. also ibid., I, p. 162. The Apostles' Creed. Cf. further Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., pp. 342-343 for the general Puritan attitude to sin.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 3. "In peccato nihil positivum."

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., II, p. 4.

Man were indicated: Reason, Will, and Affection. The sins of reason are those of knowledge and those of ignorance, (that is, an ignorance of those things that ought to be known). Will, the second basis of sin in Man, classifies it in three ways, (1) voluntary, (2) those which are neither directly from the Will nor against it, (3) and those that are partly from the Will and partly against it. The latter are the works of regenerate Man, because in his will there are contrary inclinations and actions, "the flesh of every action, willing that which is evil, and the Spirit on the other side, that which is good."<sup>1</sup> The sins of affection are those of arrogance, haughtiness, willfulness, and others. This threefold basis of sin in Man is the same as that described by the great Swiss, John Calvin.<sup>2</sup> Perkins followed the tradition with additional differences of sins.

The last Ground is that Man has by nature a conscience, God and his own conscience being the two witnesses to his thoughts.<sup>3</sup>

The basis for his doctrinal study of the Cases of Conscience is set down in these four preambles. However, before these can be approached, it must be ascertained just what phase of anthropology is to be considered. This is determined by observing the twofold condition of regenerate Man: his

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Calvin, op. cit., I, pp. 243-247.

<sup>3</sup> Supra, p. 166.

relation to God and to men. Relating to God, he bears the name Christian. He is a son of God, a member of Christ. It is his duty to know and worship God according to His will revealed in His Word.<sup>1</sup> As to his fellowmen, he is a part of some body and a member of some society. This gives rise to several questions, which were reduced to three general questions: "What must a man do, that he may come into Gods fauour, and be saued"? Second, "How a man may be in conscience assured of his owne saluation?"<sup>3</sup> Third, "How a man beeing in distress of minde, may be comforted and releued?"<sup>4</sup> The latter two questions are of major interest, since many of the answers of the first question have been met in the general discussion previously.

The answer to the second question began with the precept

That election, vocation, faith, adoption, iustification, sanctification, and eternall glorification, are neuer separated in the saluation of any man, but like inseparable companions, goe hand in hand.<sup>5</sup>

Assurance of salvation is set forth under five headings which were drawn from verses in both the Old and New Testaments:

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., II, p. 18.

(1) the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit; (2) the act of doing the will of God (inner testimony of Man's soul); (3) the fact that Man is in communion with God; (4) the very fact that God elects His own (His election is evident in those in whom sin stirs the conscience and who give thanks to Him in their hearts); (5) the Godly life is the final assurance of salvation.

The third question relates to distress of mind and all distresses in general coupled with their remedies. Distress in general is "when a man is disquieted and distempered in conscience, and consequently in his affections, touching his estate before God."<sup>1</sup> Specifically, it relates to the distress of mind which comes as a result of a temptation which may have either come upon the individual or is of a continuing sort. These distresses are remedied in a general way by the applying of the promises of God, life everlasting, and the blood of Jesus Christ. He listed several distresses, their causes and specific remedies, to illustrate distresses in general.<sup>2</sup>

#### B. Man and God

The second Book concerns Man as he stands in relation to God. The Book is divided into four general parts, the Godhead, Scripture, Religion or worship, and the Time of Worship (that is, the Sabbath).<sup>3</sup> This Book seemed to be an

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, pp. 48-112.

<sup>3</sup> The Godhead, Cf. supra, chapter IV. Scripture, cf. infra, chapter VI.

effort to bring the truth of God and Jesus Christ to men, illustrating that Almighty God is to be in all of our thoughts, our worship and its application to our lives.

### C. Man and his Neighbor

The third Book has reference to Man and his relationship to his neighbor. The principal idea put forth is Virtue, which William Perkins described as a gift of the Spirit. Virtue is applied to Man particularly in three spheres to which the believer belongs: the Family, the Church, and Society. Van Baarsel observed that this threefold division is the same as set forth by Martin Luther.<sup>1</sup> This Book provided a system of conduct and suggestions for conduct of the Christian toward his neighbor or fellowmen. It is the application of virtue to life. Not only is virtue a gift of the Spirit of God, it is " . . . a part of regeneration, whereby a man is made apt to live well."<sup>2</sup>

The virtue presented to a Christian believer is compared to virtue in a heathen. Both of these possess essentially the same virtue, but with this difference, that in the heathen virtue is a gift of God, but not part of regeneration and faith. The virtue of the heathen is the restraining grace of God. It is the renewing grace in the Christian.

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<sup>1</sup> Van Baarsel, op. cit., p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 113.

Restraining is that, which bridled, and restraineth the corruption of mens hearts, from breaking forth into outward actions, for the common good, that societies may bee preserved, and one man may live orderly with another. Renewing grace is that, which doth not onely restrain the corruption, but also mortifieth the sinne, and renews the heart daily more and more.<sup>1</sup>

This calls to mind Perkins' distinction between common and special grace.<sup>2</sup> Van Baarsel suggests that the definition of virtue herein given should be revised. Sometimes virtue in the heathen may be denied on common grace in order that the products of virtue (that is, wisdom, gentleness, temperance, etc.) may shine forth in love.<sup>3</sup>

Ames agreed that virtue was the counterpart of faith, but he went further in saying that without virtue any good works that a man may do are not rooted in goodness and will soon turn to evil or vanish.<sup>4</sup>

William Perkins indicated two kinds of virtue, Prudence, the virtue of the mind, and Will, that which orders Man's will.<sup>5</sup> The virtue of prudence is exercised in the fear of God regarding His majesty, realizing that wherever we are, we are in His presence, and whatever we think, speak, or do is known to Him. The fear of God also stirs us to walk in His presence. We are to keep His commandments and yield obedience

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. supra, pp. 145-146.

<sup>3</sup> Van Baarsel, op. cit., p. 178.

<sup>4</sup> Ames, op. cit., p. 63. The Third Booke of Conscience.

<sup>5</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 114.

to His majesty in everything. Prudence provides spiritual understanding thus enabling the believer to distinguish between spiritual truth and falsehood, and good and evil. This is similar to what Ames suggests. Prudence, believed Dr. Ames, was a requirement of virtue and thereby gave rise to evidences in watchfulness, fortitude, boldness, constancy, patience, and temperance.<sup>1</sup>

### III - CHRISTIAN LIVING

So popular was this new approach to the Christian faith that tracts began to appear shortly after Perkins' death with the sole aim of establishing a code of living. The first important exposition of such a code was a short treatise entitled, A Garden of Spirituall Flowers. It was a manual composed of a brief statement of doctrine with directions for practical, Godly living, culled from the writings of Richard Rogers, William Perkins, George Webbe, and an unknown Puritan. A Garden of Spirituall Flowers was first published in 1603 and was reprinted seven times before 1630.<sup>2</sup> The writings of Part I are easily attributed to their authors. The contrib-

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<sup>1</sup> Ames, op. cit., pp. 65-81. The Third Booke of Conscience.

<sup>2</sup> Title page of copy in New College Library, Edinburgh: A/Garden/of Spirituall Flowers./ Planted by/ Ri. Ro./ Wil. Per./ Ri. Gree./ M. M./ and Geo. Web./ I, Part./ Edinburgh/ Printed by the Hieres of/ Andrew Hart./ 1634./ Part Two was included in the same volume.



ution of William Perkins was entitled, Directions how to live well and to dye well. His opening paragraph is indicative of the general spirit of his piety.

In the morning awake with GOD; and before all other things, offer up unto him thy Morning Sacrifice of Prayer: wherein remember, First to give heartie thanks unto him for all his mercies bodilie and spirituall: and namelie, for thy late preservation: Secondlie, make an humble confession of thy sins, with earnest desire of pardon: Thirdlie, aske such necessities as are requisite for thy soule and bodie, with fervent request to be relieved in them: and namelie, desire his blessing upon thy labours in thy calling in the day to come.

In what place soever thou art, let this perswasion abide in thine heart, that thou art before the living God: and let the remembrance heereof strike thine heart with aw and reverence, and make thee afraid to sin.<sup>1</sup>

He sought to lead people into a more spiritual relationship to God. His plan was to go deeper into spiritual things than the outward expressions of worship. This was also emphasized in his exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians. He longed for his readers and hearers to search out the truth of God, giving heed how they draw close to Him. As an aid toward this end, he suggested:

By this we learne to lay aside formall praying and lippe-labour, and to learne to lift vp our harts to God in heauenly sighs and desires: for that is indeede to pray. It is the very first thing, that the child of GOD doeth inwardly to sigh and desire reconciliation with God in Christ: and he which cannot doe this, is not as yet borne of God.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, A Garden of Spirituall Flowers, op. cit., pp. Sig. B<sub>2</sub> verso - B<sub>4</sub> recto. It is to be noted that the division between the theory of conscience and the practice of conscience in our study is artificial, for Perkins made no such division.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, Workes, op. cit., II, p. 279.

### A. The Individual and Holy Living

The desire and longing for a close relationship and communion with God through prayer and worship was coupled with the firm conviction that these could never be brought about except by sublimating and denying the individual self, the will, and the affections. These last three qualities are more closely related to Satan than they are to God. "This is the first Lesson that our Saviour doth give to his Disciples, that they must denie themselves and follow him."<sup>1</sup> It is only in this way that a true Christian can do the will of God. Perkins' spirit might be characterized by the phrase in the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.' He knew that God's will could never be done on earth except as it is done in the life of the Christian. So, Christians must not only disown Satan, but they must also disinherit Him. This desire to do God's will on earth as it is in Heaven stimulated Perkins to write:

The grace here desired, is a syncerity of heart, or a ready and constant purpose & indeauour not to sinne in anything, but to doe Gods will, so as we may keepe a good conscience before God and men. . . . This must we hunger after, and pray for: seeing it is not sufficient to abstaine from euill but also to doe good, and in doing good, strue to come to perfection. A conformitte with Angels in this dutie is to be sought for, and to be begunne in this life, that in the life to come we may be like them in glorie.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 338. Cf. ibid., II, pp. 62-68, Cases of Conscience, Book II.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 339. Cf. ibid., III, pp. 255-257, Sermon in the Mount; ibid., I, pp. 496-497. It is also to be noted that Perkins kept his readers' attention focused on the future life. It is common to read such words: "Thus then this point being manifest, that a generall preparation must bee made [for death],

The awakening of the Puritan believers to the overpowering influence of sin in the life of the individual, was one of the stimuli which caused William Perkins to write as he did. He saw the influences of Satan's power all about him. As a counteracting agent, he urged the furthering of Christian fellowship by banding together. He warned, "then must wee separate & withdraw our selues from all vngodly and vnlawfull societies of men in the world whatsoeuer they be",<sup>1</sup> referring to those groups that gather together merely to pass the time in drinking and gambling. He bemoaned the fact that there were so many who so indulged, and when one refused to join with such uncouth people, he was considered

a man of no good nature: hee is foistered forth of euery company; he is no body: and if any man wil yield to runne ryot with them in the mispending of his time and goods, hee is thought to bee the best fellow in the world. . . . Surely the greatest part of the day and night is usually spent in swearing, gaming, drinking, surfetting, reuelling, and railing on the ministers of the word, and such as professe religion, to omit the enormities which they procure to themselves hereby: and this behaviour spreads it selfe like a canker ouer euery place, and it defiles both towne & countrey. But we that looke for comfort by the communion of Saints must not cast in their lot with such a wicked generation, but separate our selues from them. For vndoubtedly their societie is not of God but of the diuell: and they that are of this societie, can not be of the holy

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<sup>1</sup> let vs see what manner it must be done. And for the right doing of it, fise duties must bee practieed in the course of our liues. The first is, meditation of death in the life time. For the life of a Christian is nothing else but a meditation of death. . . . The second dutie in this general preparation is, that euery man must daily endeauour to take away from his owne death the power and strength thereof. . . ."

<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 311.

communion of Saints: and surely except the magistrate by the sword, or the Church by the power of the keyes do pull downe such fellowshippe, the holy societie of Gods Church and people must decay.<sup>1</sup>

The decay had set in somewhat in the lives of the believers. The tremendous influences of sin had had their effect. It was such a constant struggle to suspend the decay, that William Perkins was moved to expose some of the provocations, but provided the answer given in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Sermon on the Mount.<sup>2</sup> Shunning evil and obtaining a certain Godly frame of mind was so strong an obsession that both Richard Rogers and Samuel Ward listed the sins in their lives. Pride and anger were two faults that Ward listed, ". . . pride in being seen with people of importance or in exhibiting superior knowledge, and anger with everyone from the servants of the Almighty Dispenser of the weather."<sup>3</sup>

Pride was a sin Perkins warned against, pride in one's possessions and accomplishments. Invariably lands and barns are acquired regardless of the welfare and feeling of other people, or the number of other men's houses that they may pull down to build their own. These are illustrations used to denounce both pride and ostentation. Instead, men ought to seek frugality.<sup>4</sup> These are primary evidences of the constant war

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 311.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, pp. 58-59, Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>3</sup> Knappen, Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 75, Sermon in the Mount.

between the flesh and the spirit.

There are other sins and temptations. One may be drawn by his own concupiscence acting upon his soul, causing him to sin. Then, there is even the disquietness produced in the soul of the Christian when he cannot have fellowship with Christ Jesus according to his own desire. He may also be troubled in his mind because he has no feeling of the presence of Christ, who seems to have departed from him for a time. The Christian's very soul may be tempted by an over-indulgence or interest and delight in worldly lusts and pleasures. He is warned, then, to stay free of such temptation, or it may be that he will succumb to some major sin as did Noah when he became intoxicated.<sup>1</sup>

Perkins suggested that each Christian examine his heart to see whether he is qualified and able to receive God's grace. "As in former times; so at this day inward puritie is much neglected."<sup>2</sup> The pure heart is absolutely necessary for acceptable Christian living. It can only be acquired by self-examination of both life and conscience, reviewing the sins that are past, and with profound remorse, confessing them to God. This act involves utter self-condemnation. The remorse involves the pleading to God, the Father, in the name of Christ, for forgiveness. Pardon of sins is all-important for

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, pp. 374-375.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 15, Sermon in the Mount.

the Christian in order that he may live a life conformable to God.

. . . I say, for pardon of the same sinnes, as it were for life and death, and that, day and night, till the Lord send down from heauen a sweet certificate into thy perplexed conscience by his holy spirit, that al thy sinnes are done away.<sup>1</sup>

The Christian believer must endeavor to examine his life further, to pluck out of his heart not only the major sins which cause remorse, but even the erroneous imaginations that reside there, particularly those "whereby euery man naturally blesseth himselfe and thinkes highly of himselfe and though he hath one foot in the graue, yet he persuades himselfe that hee shall not die yet."<sup>2</sup> A Christian can only have right fellowship with God when he examines his life with the sole aim of eliminating all that disturbs a right relationship with Christ.

One of the major problems was determining what constituted the standard of a pure heart, and how one knew that his heart was pure. William Perkins attempted to meet these problems by listing seven signs as tests relating to the pure condition of a man's soul.

I. If thou feeles thy selfe to bee displeased at thine owne infirmities and corruptions, and to droppe vnder them as men doe vnder bodily sicknesse. II. If thou begin to hate and to flie thine owne personall sinnes. III. If thou

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 440.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 497.

feele a grief and sorrow after thou hast offended God. IV. If thou heartily desire to abstaine from all manner of sinne. V. If thou bee carefull to auoid all occasions and entisements to euill. VI. If thou trauell and doe thine endeauour in euery good thing. VII. If thou desire and pray to God to wash and rinse thine heart in the blood of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

He further added that the heart is kept pure by the special work of faith which purifies it in the first place, by applying Jesus Christ crucified, with all His merits.

The other part of the spiritual life is the peace of conscience which is 'a stable tranquility of mind'. This peace comes forth only by our faith, because it is the gift of God. As is our mind, so is our peace.<sup>2</sup> No matter what station in life Christ has called us to fill, our faith will give us peace in that duty. If we keep a good conscience, possessing this peace of mind, and if we walk as Christians worthily before our fellowmen, we are fulfilling our callings as Christians, the greatest calling in all the world.<sup>3</sup> Fulfilling the calling of a Christian also involves framing our lives in a holy way, "beeing holy in our conuersation as he that hath called vs is holy."<sup>4</sup> The end or purpose of this holy living is to guide us to Heaven, for the purpose of our being in this

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 440.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 479.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 754.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 484. Cf. ibid., I, pp. 755-756. Perkins listed four rules regarding personal callings. Cf. also ibid., I, pp. 758-759 for the rules of choice of callings, etc.

world is to be called out of this world.

Holy living has a further aspect. Though one is 'to walk worthily before our fellowmen', he must also have dealings with those about him. Sometimes, though our neighbor may wrong us, we ought to yield even though legally we might stand against the issues. We oftentimes may be required to forego the justice that we might require by civil law.<sup>1</sup> Unless the Christian observes this 'equity', justice and peace will not long endure. However, we must make a distinction between our rights and those of another's. We can yield in our own rights, but when we are dealing for another person, we must not yield too much and thereby jeopardize the other man's rights. This rule also holds good for Christ and the Church. "For as it is Equity often to yeeld thy right, so to yeeld in Gods causes, is to betray the truth."<sup>2</sup>

Several rules were listed for good Christian living. Two of those rules give a fitting summary to this aspect of his pietistic thought.

Euery man within the compasse of his calling, must not onely intend and labour for his owne good; but for the common good, in that Church and commonwealth wherein hee liueth . .

Defraud or oppresse no man in any matter. This rule concerneth our manner of dealing in common affaires. In all our trafficke and bargaines, as we would benefit our selues; so we must seeke to benefit those with whom we deale. This

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 444.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 445.



rule is verie necessarie to be learned: for this is the common practise of all men in their traffique, To vse all meanes whereby they may defraud others; so that they get vnto themselues, they care not how it come. But in the feare of God, let vs remember, that the practise of iustice (to which we are all bound) standeth in this; that wee defraud or oppresse no man in any thing.<sup>1</sup>

## B. The Individual and His Conduct

Generally speaking, the Sabbatarianism of the English Puritans was the first and only important contribution to the development of Reformed theology in England.<sup>2</sup> Sabbath worship was not essential to Calvin. He believed that one day was as good as another for worship. It did not matter which day it was as long as it was observed consistently.<sup>3</sup> The English Puritans, however, found a new answer to the age-old problems as to which day is the Christian day of worship and how it is to be kept. The Reformers on the Continent had established morning and evening prayers, but they left to the worshiper's conscience how the rest of the day was to be spent. "This however was not enough for the Puritans. They went to the Bible, identified Sunday with the Sabbath, and observed it with Judaic strictness."<sup>4</sup>

Though Perkins disagreed with Calvin, he was not a strict

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., p. 442.

<sup>3</sup> Calvin, op. cit., I, pp. 341-344.

<sup>4</sup> Gwatkin, H. M., Church and State in England to the Death of Queen Anne, (Longmans Green and Co., London, 1917), p. 256.

Sabbatarian.<sup>1</sup> He felt that it was more correct to worship on the seventh day because that is the substance of the fourth commandment. However, the Christian must not be bound by the Jewish strictness.<sup>2</sup>

The obseruation of the Sabbath is morall, in as much as it is a certain seuenth day, which preserueth and conserueth the ministrie of the word, & the solemne worship of God, especially in the assemblies of the Church. And in this respect we are vnnon this day, as well<sup>3</sup> enioyned to rest from our vocations, as the Iewes were. . .

He did agree that the Christian Sabbath was the day directed by our Lord. As Christ substituted the Lord's Supper for the Paschal ceremony, so he put the first day instead of the Jewish Sabbath. The Christian Sabbath begins in the morning and lasts until Monday morning, because Christ rose from the grave on Sunday morning. Further, he added, "The Sabbath is . . . ceremonial, in that it was obserued the seauenth day after the creation of the world, and was then solemnized with such ceremonies."<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps the more important question of that time was how the day should be spent. There were three views as to Sabbath observance. Some said that it should be kept as strictly as

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, op. cit., p. 181. "Though according to modern standards Perkins was strict, he was far from an extremist, and his views were not inconsistent with those held by the majority of the clergy in the Established Church."

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 47.

the Jews kept it. Perkins believed that this view did not consider all of the Scripture, for the Law was no longer valid because Jesus fulfilled the Law. On the other extreme were those who followed the Continental Reformers or even went to the extent of the Romanists, believing that after worship one is entitled to do whatever he desires in the way of work or entertainment. This, too, was an invalid idea, thought William Perkins. Such a basis for Sabbath observance would destroy the true value of the commandment and thereby make all days the same. He set forth his thoughts by saying that since the Sabbath is both moral and ceremonial it ought to be observed strictly, for the Sabbath is a type of internal sanctification for the people of God. By strict observance he meant "as it were, a continuall resting from the worke of sinne."<sup>1</sup> Any work that could be done the day before the Sabbath or left undone until the day after the Sabbath, ought to be carried out in that manner. However, we are not forbidden to work on the Sabbath provided the work is holy and of present necessity, or such as maintains and preserves the service and glory of God.<sup>2</sup>

Men thinke if they go to Church before and afternoone to heare Gods word, then al the day after they may do what they list, and spend the rest of the time at their owne pleasure: but the whole day is the Lord's, and therefore must be spent wholly in his seruice, both by publike

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 47. Cf. ibid., III, pp. 240-241, for these three ideas regarding Sabbath observance.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 230.

hearing of the word, and also by private reading and meditation of the same.<sup>1</sup>

The Sabbath, then, being both moral and ceremonial, has a double sanctification, public and private.

The problem of shops being opened for sales was a dilemma which he faced and answered. It is not right that shops be opened on Sunday in order that the shopkeeper may make a profit. Instead, the shopkeeper should only sell to those who buy of necessity. No private profit should be made in the transaction. The profit that normally comes from such a sale on Sunday, should be given to some work of relief and mercy among the poor. If the buyer should be one of the poor, the sale should be made without any profit whatsoever. Although he developed this theory, he had little faith that it would be adopted.

This indeed will hardly be obtained at trades-mens hands, but yet they must knowe that the whole Sabbath day is the Lords, wherein he will be worshipped with delight, neither ought men to do therein their owne workes, nor seeke their owne wills, nor speake their owne words.<sup>2</sup>

The Cambridge Puritan did not set the course for latter Puritans. Both Ames and Thomas Taylor were much stricter in their Sabbath observances.<sup>3</sup>

Though William Perkins believed that recreation, drink-

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 230. Cf. ibid., I, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 92, Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ames, op. cit., pp. 95-98. The Fourth Booke of Conscience. Cf. Taylor, Thomas, The Progresse of Saints to Full Holinesse, (John Bartlet, London, 1630), pp. 119-120.

ing, and gambling were not to be indulged in on the Lord's Day, he felt that there was a place for recreation during the week. It was classed as a thing 'indifferent'. Other Puritans later adopted this general thought. Therefore, to state dogmatically that the average Puritan was opposed to pleasure in any form is erroneous. They believed that there was a time and a season for everything. Calvin enjoyed quots and even taught that it was lawful to enjoy God's gifts as food and drink.<sup>1</sup> Perkins followed this premise generally. The chief value of recreation is the exercise one receives. This should be coupled with a fear of God. These two, exercise and fear of God, should be used to preserve and strengthen the body as well as confirm 'the mind in holinesse'. Included in recreation was shooting, hunting, music, concerts, such games as riddles, and "... the searching out, or the contemplation of the workes of God."<sup>2</sup>

There were some practices of that day that he warned his people against following. Dancing, processions, and plays were forbidden as is warned in the second commandment. Also "such feasts, as are consecrated to the memoriall, & honour of idols."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., pp. 427, 438.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 57. Cf. ibid., II, pp. 140-143.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 37; ibid., I, p. 539. Things forbidden: "the dauncing commonly vsed in these daies, in which men & women young men and maides, all mixed together, daunce . . . with many wanton gestures." Dancing, said Perkins, is not indifferent because it may give rise to great wickedness as idolatry, fornication, and drunkenness. Cf. Taylor, op. cit., pp. 120-121. Taylor was more vehement in his condemnation of stage plays, thereby showing the progression of Puritan casuistry.

William Perkins condemned the plays of that day. He based his argument on the Scripture passage, "Cursed is eueryone that hangeth on the tree."<sup>1</sup> The nature of this discussion could hardly conform to present day standards of argumentation.

Againe, let vs consider the scope of this law. Because he that hangs on the tree, is accursed: therefore saith the law of God, he must be taken downe and buried. Marke the equity of this law: and that is, that things euill and accursed, are to be remooued from the eye and sense of man. This charge the Lord giues of lesse matters, namely, of sights vndecent, and vnseemly. Againe, we are commanded not so much as to name fornication, vncleanesse, couetousnesse, iesting, foolish talking, &c. Eph. 5.3. Here we are to put in mind, that the plaies (commonly in vse) are to be banished out of all Christian societies. For they doe nothing els but reuiue and represent the vile and wicked fashions of the world, and the misdemeanour of men, which are things accursed, and therefore to be buried, and not once to be spoken of.<sup>2</sup>

The use of cosmetics was another thing William Perkins disliked. The beautifying of the face was then a thriving business based upon human vanity, as it is today.<sup>3</sup> Care was suggested in the way one should dress. He accused both men and women of indulging in poor taste in the selection of apparel, a common sin. The sin may be the wearing of clothes that are too costly.<sup>4</sup>

Intemperance was a weighty matter in the early days of Puritanism. It was a vital personal problem to William Perkins. The fact that he had been able to conquer it in his youth gave him greater assurance in setting temperate conduct as a standard.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 239.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 223.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 183, Sermon in the Mount.

Two common failings concerned the uses of liquor and tobacco. He tolerated the use of these items. It was permissible to drink wine and to eat 'liberally and plentifully'.<sup>1</sup> The excessive use or misuse of these practices was obnoxious.

A common practise it is to drink with glasses, without feet, which must neuer rest; also by bell, the die, the douzen, the yard, & other measures, and then vse Tobacco or other means to sharpen appetite stil: an horrible sin exceeding this sinne of these seducers themselves.<sup>2</sup>

If there is a word to describe Perkins' stand on questions of social conduct, it must be the word moderation, in food, drink, and apparel, and also in getting and spending money.<sup>3</sup>

The use of money posed a problem that haunted the Puritans for decades. They agreed that the love of wealth is a vicious form of idolatry. William Perkins cried that

. . . these Mammonites abound euerie where, appeares by the common practises of oppression, extortion, and cruelty, in hard dealing towards the poore, by greedie Landlords and Vsurers; as also by the practises of the rich in the time of dearth, for by their hoarding vp store, ingrossing of commodities, and enhancing of their price, to the augmenting of their priuate wealth, they mightily increase Gods wrath vpon the poore. Indeepe God hath his seruants which haue him onely for their God, but the number of them is small, in respect to those that set their hearts vpon the world, and make Mammon their God.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 547.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, n. 546. Gambling by dice and lots was forbidden on the grounds of predestination. Lots can be used if used in great reverence. The disposition of the lot is determined by the Lord. Cf. ibid., I, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 340.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 176, Sermon in the Mount. Cf. Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., p. 409. Thomas Lupton raised his voice in a more forceful manner in 1589.

The love for money was the basis of the continued rise of usury in the latter days of Queen Elizabeth's reign. There were beginnings in Perkins' day, however, of a reasonable solution to the problem. Men like Thomas Lupton were bitter foes toward any interest taking, but there were those who placidly accepted the social conditions as part of the agrarian society in which they lived. These latter mainly disregarded the problem. On the whole, there was no attempt among the casuists of that time to settle the issue once and for all. Perkins was one of the few who tried to face the issue with an adequate solution. He defended interest rates, provided there is fairness on the part of both parties in the transaction, so that neither is damaged in any way.<sup>1</sup> The practice of usury, so

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 63. Conditions on which interest may be taken: "I. If a man take heed that he exact nothing, but that which his debter can get by good and lawfull meanes. II. He may not take more then the gaine which drinks vp the liuing of him that vseth the mony. III. He must sometimes be so farre from taking gaine, that he must not require the principall, if his debter be by ineuitable & iust casualties brought behind, and it be also plaine that he could not make, so not by great diligence, any commoditie of the money borrowed.

The reasons why a man may take sometimes aboue the principall, are, 1. That which the debter may giue, hauing himselfe an honest gaine besides, & no man any waies endamaged, that the creditour may safely receiue. 2. It is conuenient, that he which hath money lent him, and gaineth by it, should shew all possible gratitude to him, by whose goods he is enriched. 3. It is often for the benefit of the creditour, to haue the goods in his owne hands which he lent.

Object. Money is not fruitfull, therefore it is unlawfull to receiue more then we lent out.

Answ. Albeit money in itself bee not fruitfull, yet it is made very fruitfull by the borrowers good vse, as ground is which is not fruitful excent it be tilled."



rampant in his day was bitterly condemned throughout his works because it is contrary to the Word of God, "and may very fitly be tearmed biting lucre . . ."<sup>1</sup>

The individual's life in the home was an important consideration, and William Perkins had some suggestions on 'Christian Oeconomie' or the correct governing of the home. Contrary to the earlier Puritan mode which looked on marriage as inferior to the celibate life, Perkins found in marriage some superiorities.<sup>2</sup> Certain dangers to harmonious marriage were inherent in Man because of the Fall. His view of marriage had rather a medieval aspect. Man was exalted over the woman who was by creation the weaker of the two sexes, made of inferior quality, and was therefore legally subject to the husband. This principle was used with great effect by earlier Puritans against the rule of Mary Tudor, for a woman could hardly rule over a nation when she was legally subject to the man. Perkins joined the other Puritans in showing from Scripture that the husband was to rule the wife.<sup>3</sup> There was also agreement with the other Puritans that husbands did not have the right to discipline their wives by beating, for there is no warrant in the Word of God for this type of correction. The two are one flesh

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 63. Ibid., II, p. 126; I, p. 750; and III, p. 46, Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 671.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 691.

and no man can beat his own flesh. However, he could admonish his wife vocally if he should see the need, or if every means is used without success, the husband can bring her before the Magistrate. Agreeing with Henry Smith, Perkins wrote,

Now, the husband that hath a wife so stubborne and peeuish, must beare, if it may bee borne, as the portion of his crosse laid vpon him by god. And in this case if he bee impatient, he may in some sort be pardoned and pitied, but he is not wholly to be excused.<sup>1</sup>

The first purpose of marriage was procreation of children for the continuance of the race. The second was procreation of children in order that the Church of God may be kept holy and that there will always be a holy group of men and women worshipping God. In the third place, in order to avoid fornication, marriage is encouraged, subduing the sex drive of the flesh. The fourth purpose was that married couples would be better able to conduct the duties of their callings.<sup>2</sup> One can gain from this list that the primary purpose of marriage is to propagate children and to provide for their welfare. His instruction in his exposition on Hebrews, Chapter 11, provided clear instruction in this matter.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 692. Henry Smith wrote, "if he cannot reform his wife without beating, he is worthy to be beaten for choosing no better; when he hath used all means that he may and yet she is like herself, he must take her for his cross." Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., p. 454. The common law was that husbands could beat their wives with a rod no bigger than his thumb.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 671.

Hence let all Parents learne a lesson of Adam, the first Parent that was in the world; namely, to procure the good of their children: he nourtered his children excellently:  
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So must thou doe with the children which God hath giuen thee. 1. Prouide for them carefully till they be of age, take heede they miscarrie not any way for want of things needfull. 2. So bring them vp as that they may bee apt to liue in some godly calling whereby to do good in his Church, and that calling thou must appoint them, according to the fitnes of their gifts. Adam appointed them not both one calling, but diuerse callings according to the diuersitie of their gifts: and thou must see it be a lawfull and honest calling, for so are both these. Then 3. (the greatest matter of all these) teach them religion, and the true manner of fearing and worshipping God; that as by the two first, thy child may liue well in this world, so by this<sup>1</sup> he may bee made an heire of the kingdome of heauen.

Parents are warned not to be too severe or too indulgent with their children, but always keep in mind the

first and principall care . . . the Church, that those of their children which haue the most pregnant wit, and be indued with the best gifts, be consecrated vnto God and brought vp in the studie of the scriptures, to serue afterward in the Ministry of the Church.<sup>2</sup>

God can thus be served in the home in a very real way. One aid toward this end, is the conducting of family devotions in the home. He suggested them in the morning and evening with grace before and after meals.<sup>3</sup>

William Perkins traversed the medieval prohibition of divorce and remarriage. He endorsed the Zurich doctrine of divorce because of adultery or desertion. He remarked of

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 15. Cf. also ibid., I, pp. 52-53, government of the home according to the fifth commandment.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 694.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, pp. 669-670.

adultery:

The committers of this sinne cut off themselves from humane societie, and become men of death, and women of death, according to Gods law. And it will neuer be well with humane societie, till adulterers be made fellows, their liues taken from them, and their goods confiscated. . . . this sin bringeth the ruine of the families of adulterous persons: and it sets a fire in them that burnes to destruction.<sup>1</sup>

### C. The Individual and His Neighbor

Wise and godly silence is as excellent a vertue as holy speech: for hee knoweth not how to speake which knoweth not how to hold his tongue: the rule of our silence must be the law of God. By meanes of which, wise consideration must be had, whether things which we haue in mind be for Gods glory, and our neighbours good: which done, we are answerably to speake or to bee silent.<sup>2</sup>

In saying this, he was establishing the Scriptural attitude of a man's relationship to other people. The tale-bearer or gossip was condemned. There are those who whisper about a secret fault of another, who add to or change a story as it serves their purpose, or who dream or surmise things about their fellowmen that were never done. Not only were these denounced, but particularly the gossip who colors his tale prefaced with complimentary remarks about his victim,

faining that he is very sory that his neighbour hath done such or such thing: that he speaketh not of malice, but of a good mind: that he is constrained to sweake: that he speaketh not all hee could speake; that the partie to whome the tale is told must keepe it secret.<sup>3</sup>

One ought always to keep in mind the Law of God.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 330.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 450.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 448.

We are commaunded to seeke the glorie of God in the first table; and in the second the good of our neighbour: when thy speech therefore will serue either for Gods glorie, or the good of thy neighbour, then thou must speake: if it serue for neither, then be silent. Againe, if thy silence be either for Gods glorie, or the good of thy neighbour, then be silent: if it will not, then speake. And because it is hard for a man to know when his speech or silence will serue for these two ends: therefore we must pray vnto God that he will teach and direct vs herein: .<sup>1</sup>

Thinking of the Law in another way, God's commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill', had broader implications then the taking of a man's life. It signifies also a damaging of our fellow-man as well. One should not even hurt or hinder another's life by anger, envy, grudges, lack of compassion and sorrow at another's misfortunes, or by a desire for revenge. These are sins of the heart. There are other sins, those of the lips or words. Damage can be done to another by bitterness in speaking, reproaches, and railings against one's neighbor, or even by fighting, by contentions, or by "complaints to euery one of such as offer vs iniuries."<sup>2</sup>

Another common sin is invariably found in both the heart and the tongue - that is flattery. There are various means of flattery, but the most despised by Perkins was that whereby a man speaks well of another to his face and praises him, but behind that one's back, he speaks "his pleasure, and euen out[sic] his throat."<sup>3</sup>

Perkins was not for taking joy out of life. Diplomatic speech was acceptable under certain conditions. However, it

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 447.

must be carefully watched. Jesting was tolerated in moderation. Laughter was a God-given faculty, but must be used moderately.<sup>1</sup> One ought to seek for holy speech and conversation,<sup>2</sup> for sobriety in judgment of his neighbor.<sup>3</sup>

A further sin brought to the attention of the seventeenth century reader involved misuse of one's neighbor. In the treatise, A Fruitfull Dialogue Concerning the Ende of the World, the Christian is taught to watch carefully his dealings with men. The dialogue is a conversation between Christian and Worldling. Walking along the way to Cambridge, Christian converses with Worldling. He soon learns that Worldling is bringing some wheat to market with the desire of selling it at a large profit. If he could not make a large profit, he would refuse to sell. This was a gross sin, especially when the poor have such great need of it.<sup>4</sup>

The Christian should possess a deep concern for the spiritual welfare of his neighbor.

We must seeke al meanes to win him to the profession of Christian Religion . . . . We must liue amongst men without offence. . . . The light of our good life must bee as a lanterne to direct the waies of our neighbors. . . . If our neighbour offend, we are to admonish him. . . . If our neighbour runne the waies of Gods commaundements, (as Dauid speaketh) we ought to encourage him in the same.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 448.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 440-441.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 447.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, pp. 465-467.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., I, p. 57.

Servants were an integral part of the seventeenth century household and were treated as such by the Puritan writers.<sup>1</sup> Perkins knew this and was thus stimulated to endorse slavery as a lawful Christian practice, particularly in countries where the possession of servants or slaves is permitted by the law of the land. However, there was some reservation in his mind. The slaves must be treated and dealt with in a Christian spirit.<sup>2</sup>

Then, the Christian is warned not to have dealings with idolaters in religious matters, or in an amicable spirit, "that is, of familiarity and speciall loue."<sup>3</sup> One must have civil dealings with them. Because of the general calling of the Christian, he is to live at peace with all men. Atheists, though, are not fit to live. ". . . they are to bee punished with death, as not worthe to liue in humane societie, and the greatest torment that can be deuised by the witte of man, is too good for them."<sup>4</sup> This treatment of atheists was in agreement with Calvin and Beza.

#### D. The Individual, His Church, Society and Nation

There were some weaknesses in the Church of England while Whitgift was Archbishop of Canterbury. Perkins granted that.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., p. 464.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, pp. 697-698.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 693.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 49.

The action of the Brownists to meet the problems was not to be commended, because the problems were never really faced, but only new ones created. He insisted that

no man ought to seuer himselfe from the Church of England, for some wants that he therein: We haue the true doctrine of Christ preached among vs by Gods blessing, and though there be corruptions in manners among vs, yea and though they could iustly find fault with our doctrine; yea so long as wee hold Christ, no man ought to seuer himselfe from our church.<sup>1</sup>

Christ did not sever himself from the synagogue, even though He disliked the preaching of the Scribes. His remaining to hear them provided Him with the reasons to reprove them. So, no one ought to forsake the Church of England. In a very real sense, it is "the true visible Church of God, called and sanctified in truth, . . ."<sup>2</sup> It is the corn field of God, and the people are the 'corn heap'.

The Brownists and other separatists were likened to 'blind' and 'besotten' people who cannot see that within the "Church of England is a godly heape of Gods corne."<sup>3</sup> There is legitimate criticism of the 'chaff' within the Church. It is very difficult to find some who have "dedicated themselves to the Lord, in holy and sincere obddience, and labour to make conscience of all sinnes: . . ."<sup>4</sup> However, since the Church does not separate itself from Christ, one is not to separate from the Church.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 264.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 482.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 425.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, pp. 425-426.



Only when the Church of God and the doctrine of religion are corrupted in substance is separation warranted.<sup>1</sup> The Church of England could not be charged with either of these faults. Though he was a staunch defender of the Church of England, it could not be said that Perkins defended it right or wrong. Van Baarsel provides an excellent summary of his relationship toward the Church of England.

Zijn ideaal is, gelijk dat van Cartwright en zoovele anderen, de verbreiding der Gereformeerde waarheid in de van Roomsche smotten niet geheel en al gezuiverde Anglicaansche Kerk. Hiermee hangt ongetwikkeld samen, dat hij verschillende dingen verdedigt, waaraan een Roomsche bij smaak niet te miskennen valt.<sup>2</sup>

Unlike Dering and Greenham, who believed that the poor were helpless and ought to be cared for with every effort, Perkins seemingly lacked that compassionate outlook, and believed that it was their predestined estate. This did not indicate that they should not be helped. Christian charity was a virtue to be desired and sought. Unfortunately, it was not too evident among the better social groups or classes, or even among the Church people.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 307.

<sup>2</sup> Van Baarsel, op. cit., p. 222. "His ideal is, like the ideal of Cartwright and so many other people, to spread the reformed truth in the Anglican Church which is not yet totally purified from the Roman taint. Correlated with this undoubtedly is his defence of many things in which one can taste a Roman component." Van Baarsel evidently had reference to the stringent rule that Perkins advocated, that of not permitting easy separation from the Church of England.

It were to be wished that our church and people might haue the like praise for this vertue of service to the poore. But the richer sort spend their substance and wealth vpon haukes and hounds, buls, and beares, vpon costly attire, and banquetting: so as when the poore that are in need come for releife, they haue nothing to spare; and if any thing be giuen, it is drawn as hardly from them as a ribbe out of their side: Men wil giue frankly to delight themselues with plaies and pastimes, and such like vanities; but the poore that be their owne flesh, may die in the streets for want of that which men giue their dogs. But if we respect the commendation of Christ Iesus, let vs abandon these vanities which hinder vs in the practise of this vertue of seruice for the good of our brethren.<sup>1</sup>

This did not mean that the poor were wards of the rich. They must work to better their own economic status. In a sense, he classified them as parasites in society. This view was to become the predominant view of later Puritanism, and it may have abetted Puritan alliances with the merchant and gentry classes. It placed the Puritans in an embarrassing situation, whereby they were "precluded from speaking their mind freely on dangerous economic topics."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, relief became a matter of secular concern.

The economic changes in England culminating in the rapid increase in wealth among the commercial classes and the decay-  
ing of the old landed aristocracy, led to the demand for greater skills and talents. It caused such an upheaval in society, that Perkins was impelled to consider it an act of

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 311.

<sup>2</sup> Knapton, Tudor Puritanism, op. cit., p. 416.

the Devil.<sup>1</sup> God has assigned us each our calling, he maintained, and if we seek our own desires and ambitions, it results in disobedience to God. The Lord is the One to change our station in life, socially and economically.

. . . the present estate and condition of life, wherein euerie man is set by God, is the best estate for him: health is best in time of health, & sicknes in time of sicknes: riches when they are inioied, pouerty and want when the Lord changeth his hand: life whilest he liueth, yea and death it self is the best when as that change befalleth: and all this is, because the Lord so ordereth and disposeth vnto euerie man out of his wise prouidence, which we for our parts must in all our thoughts be submitted vnto.<sup>2</sup>

Civil authority or the Sovereign is to rule over the clergy and the Church in temporal interests. Even if the authorities be cruel or wicked, the Church and its people must yield obedience to the State, if needs be, in punishment and suffering which may or may not be just. In this way the Christian can preserve the dignity of his neighbor. Perkins, then, was a true Erastian.

We are to be admonished to obedience because euerie higher power is the ordinance of God, and the obedience which we performe thereto, God accepteth it as though it were done to himselfe and to Christ. . . . Obedience is to be performed to our superiours with diligence and faithfulness.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 542. Cf. Houghton, Walter E., Jr. The Formation of Fuller's Holy and Profane States, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1938), pp. 44-45.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 553.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 50. Cf. ibid., I, p. 670. Perkins supported the Crown, Queen Elizabeth; The Dedicatory: "To the Right Honourable Lord Henrie, Earl of Kent, Lord Hastings, Weisford, and Ruthyn. Right Honourable, &c. Great hath beene the mercede of

It was not out of harmony with Scripture for a nation to maintain its authority by the use of arms. This was as vital a problem to Perkins as it is today. He believed that even the faith of Jesus Christ delivered to the saints is to be maintained by the 'sword' if necessary.

All men may vse the sword to strike and to kill, into whose hands God putteth the sword. Now God putteth it into the hand, first & principally of the publike Magistrate, who when occasion serues may draw it out.<sup>1</sup>

A Man may use the sword also in self defence. In contrast to the Anabaptist teaching, the Christian or the Magistrate may justly wield the sword in defence of the State.<sup>2</sup>

When William Perkins developed his casuistry, he was mindful of the common people. Yet, he always kept his thoughts concentrated on God, trying to raise the level of the laity to a level where they, too, could grasp the eternal truths that were so vivid to him. Though he held a neutral position in most things, he defended the Puritan cause from attack. Identifying himself with that cause, he compared it to the

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God to this our English nation, in that beside peace and protection, he hath bestowed on us the treasure of His Gospell, now more then forty yeares, and that under the gouernement of a most gracious Queene. It is a benefit unspeakable: and England (as I thinke) neuer had the like before.

For this great mercy, we owe to God all thankfulnessse that heart can thinke, or tongue can speake. Our thankfulnessse must shew it selfe unto God from euery euill way, to beleue in Christ, and to walke in newnesse of good life."

<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, pp. 175-176.

first century of the Christian era, when the Gentiles believed the Apostolic proclamations of the Gospel to be foolishness. People jeered and laughed when they proclaimed the Gospel to be the Word of God. So lamented Perkins,

The same fault is exceedingly rife amongst vs in these daies: for let a man make conscience of his waies and endeauour to please God, he is presently branded with the names of reproach, by those whose tongues are nimble to speake euill of things they neuer knew; who are to know that a man cannot be too precise in keeping the commandements of God, and that themselves haue made a promise in Baptisme to walke in no other waies, and ought to renew the same so often as they come to the Lords table.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 545.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE WORD AND THE SPIRIT

With the return to Scripture dogmatics as a result of the Reformation, there was also the rediscovery of the Bible as the Word of God. Until the Reformation, the Bible, though it had been the basis of Christian doctrine on the whole, was in the hands of the clergy for them to interpret its meaning to the common people as the Church prescribed. However, the Reformation gave a new understanding to the true meaning of the Church. The Bible, then, had to stand on its own merits. As men studied and read it, they gained a new picture of God's Word, a picture of Christianity which they had never seen.<sup>1</sup> No longer was the Church the authority in matters of belief. Scripture was the yard-stick, and the Holy Spirit was the Agent who made the Bible the Word of God.

The Puritans adopted this new idea regarding the Bible, giving it a very high interpretation.

They found that they read the Bible in a different way from the way in which they read other books. When they read the Bible something took place in their hearts, not only in their heads. The Holy Spirit was at work, illuminating what was written and enlightening their minds to understanding.<sup>2</sup>

This led the Puritans to write tomes of commentaries on the

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<sup>1</sup> Nuttall, Geoffrey F., The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience, (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1947), pp. 21-25.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

books of the Bible which resulted in an ever increasing interest in the Word of God. William Perkins joined in that procession of writers with his expositions, following the fashion of the contemporary Puritans of his day in the interpretation of Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

The Calvinists of late Tudor days believed that the Word of God provided the rule to be followed in both Church and society in every respect. The more moderate Puritans failed to adopt this idea and were thereby exposed to criticism which itself was based on Scripture.<sup>2</sup>

The theory was that truth in scripture when brought to bear upon conscience by the force of reason would lead men to early agreement unless they chose wilfully and maliciously to resist the light. That fact was, as experience was to demonstrate, that scripture, which had more poetry in its pages than law, worked upon men of uncritical minds, lively imaginations, differing temperaments and conflicting interests not as a unifying but as a divisive force. Elizabethan policy, waiving consistency and ignoring variations of opinion when politically harmless, gave scope for all sorts of men to search the fantastic dreams, to collect bands of earnest souls, in short to go and eat forbidden fruit so long as they did not try to upset the apple cart. But the reformers could hardly have been expected to foresee that such and not uniformity of belief and opinion was destined to become the accustomed English way.<sup>3</sup>

## I - SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY

The harmony of the conscience, or a good conscience as Perkins put it, is brought about by the action of the Word of God.<sup>4</sup> The Word of God is brought to bear through the power

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<sup>1</sup> He wrote seven commentaries as found in the collected works.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Haller, H. M., The Rise of Puritanism, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1938), p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Perkins, W., Workes, (John Legatt, London, 1612), II, p. 646.

of the Holy Spirit, the Agent of authority. A clear picture of this belief was given, a picture infused with the color and spirit of the times.

. . . For the setting of our consciences, that Scripture is the Word of God, there be two testimonies. One is the Euidence of Gods Spirit, imprinted and expressed in the Scriptures: and this is an excellencie of the word of God aboue all words, and writings of men and angels: and containes thirteen points. The first is, the puritie of the law of Moses, whereas the lawes of men, haue their imperfections. The second is, that the Scripture sets downe the true cause of all misery, namely sinne, and the perfect remedy, namely Christs death. The third is, the Antiquity of Scripture, in that it setteth downe an historie from the beginning of the world. The fourth is, prophecies of things in sundrie bookes of Scripture, which none could possibly fore-tell, but God. The fifth is, the confirmation of the doctrine of the Prophets and apostles by miracles, that is, workes done aboue, and contrarie to the strength of nature, which none can doe but God. The sixth is, the consent of all the Scriptures with themselves. The seauenth is, the confession of enemies, as namely, of heretickes, who in oppugning of Scriptures, alleadge Scriptures, and thereby confesse the truth therof. The eighth is, an vnspeakable detestation that Sathan and all wicked men beare to the doctrine of Scripture. The ninth is, the protection and preservation of it, from the beginning to this houre, by a speciall prouidence of God. The tenth is, the constant confession of Martyrs, that haue shedde their blood for the Gospell of Christ. The eleauenth is, that fearefull punishments and iudgement haue befallen them, that haue oppugned the word of God. The twelfth is the holines of them that professe the Gospell. The last is the effect and operation of the word: for it is an instrument of God, in the right vse whereof, wee receiue the testimonie of the Spirit, of our adoption, and are conuerted vnto God. And yet neuerthelesse, the word which conuerteth, is contrarie to the wicked nature of man.<sup>1</sup>

#### A. The Bible as the Word of God

Mindful of Perkins' basis of theology,<sup>2</sup> we learn that the

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 170. Cf. ibid., II, p. 54 for a longer study. Also cf. ibid., II, pp. 271, 649, and III, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 10-11. "The Bodie of Scripture is a doctrine sufficient to liue well." Cf. supra, p. 100.



Bible in itself possesses the only complete authority for life. It contains all truth. Therefore, no other authority is comparable to it. He held the position which we term today the dictation theory of inspiration. The Bible to him was not only the pure Word of God, but it was also the actual writing of God. It is not inconceivable that Perkins received this elevated view of the Word of God from his teacher, Dr. William Whitaker, whom he revered.<sup>1</sup> In his exposition on Galatians, William Perkins forcefully affirmed this.

Here Paul notably expresseth the Authoritie and honour of an Apostle, which is to be heard euen as Christ himselfe: because in preaching, he is the mouth, and in writing, the hand of God. This authoritie is to bee maintained: and the consideration of it is of great vse. . . . indeed the principall meanes whereby we are assured touching the truth of Scripture, is, that the books of Scripture were penned by men, whose writings, and sayings, we are to receiue, euen as from Christ himselfe, because they had either propheticall or apostolicall authority, and were immediately taught and inspired in writing: & all this may bee discerned, by the matter, forme, & circumstances of the foresaid books.<sup>2</sup>

Further, he believed that the Word of God is not only in the Holy Scriptures, but the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God.<sup>3</sup> The Bible is written in a language 'fit for the Church' by

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<sup>1</sup> Whitaker, William, A Disputation on Holy Scripture, (Parker Soc., Cambridge U. Press, 1849), p. 289. Cf. Ames, William, The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, (Edward Griffin, London, n.d.), p. 149. Ames stated dogmatically: [God][sic] "did dictate and suggest all the words in which they should be written."

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 647.

men who were the clerks of the Holy Spirit. It is intrinsically its own authenticator, for "we know that Scripture is God's Word, by Scripture, . . ."<sup>1</sup>, because there is no other Author but God. This was not new with William Perkins, nor did it find new interpretation through him. It did receive an impetus, however, John Robinson, who was thrilled by the works and teaching of William Perkins, reaffirmed the thought much later in his study of the catechism of the lecturer of Christ's College.

Q. Wherefore are the whole Scriptures to be read and opened?

A. Because the whole Word of God is pure, written for our learning and comfort, given by divine inspiration, and is profitable for doctrine, reproofe, correction and instruction, and from which nothing may be diminished.

#### B. The Holy Spirit

The Author of Holy Scripture is God. When he gave this answer as he did so frequently, Perkins meant that the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, stirred men to write. That was not the only function of the Holy Spirit. The Third Person of the Trinity also preserved the Scriptures down through the ages, keeping them pure from contamination. The Holy Spirit further conveys the will of God the Father to believing men through the Word. The question may arise, How, then, does

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 541. Cf. ibid., II, pp. 56-60. Here he listed fourteen objections by rationalist thinkers.

<sup>2</sup> Robinson, John, An Appendix to Mr. Perkins His Six Principles of Christian Religion, (1641), Sig. C<sub>5</sub> verso.

the Second Person of the Trinity relate to the written revelation? Perkins' answer was, that since Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant, He is the Sovereign Authority in the expounding of the Word. The Church of Christ is left only with the judgment and interpretation of the Holy Scripture.<sup>1</sup> ". . . herein we obserue the excellencie of . . . the whole Scripture of God: for all of it is the gift of the Father to the Sonne, and the Sonne vnto his church."<sup>2</sup>

Since the Church possesses the duty of interpretation, those in the Church must know God intimately, because of the part the Holy Spirit plays in the interpretation to the individual. The "principall Interpreter of the Scripture, is the Holy Ghost. 2. Pet. 1.20."<sup>3</sup> The important place that the Holy Spirit plays then, caused William Perkins to warn all the ministers of the Gospel to be very careful in the use of any text of the Word of God, that they may interpret it rightly.<sup>4</sup>

If we deliuer but a mans testimony, honesty will compell vs as neere as we can to keepe both his words and his meaning; much more should conscience moue vs in alleadging the testimony of the Lord, to haue carefull respect to the euidence of truth: and therefore that sparing course is very commendable, whereby in quoting of Scripture men must make sure to keepe themselves to the Lords true meaning, lest by deprauiing his words they become followers of Satan; . . .<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 209.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 651.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 393.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., III, p. 393.

The best way of interpreting the Word of God is to let it be its own interpreter. That is, one should not go outside the sense of Scripture to gain an understanding as to what the particular passage means.<sup>1</sup> The true sense of the Word will never be understood if one listens to reasoning, the traditions, or authority of men.

And the sense which is agreeable to the words of the text, to the scope of the place, to other circumstances, and to the analogie of faith, in the plainer places of Scripture, is the proper and infallible sense of Scripture.<sup>2</sup>

There is only one sense or meaning to Scripture or a given passage, and that is the literal meaning, the natural sense of the passage.<sup>3</sup> Interpretation is the opening of the words and sentences to gain the natural sense. This does not eliminate allegory. Allegory provides the means to say the same thing. Then again, one must keep in mind the figurative interpretation. "If the proper signification of the words be against common reason, or against the analogie of faith, or against good manners, they are not then to be taken properly, but by figure."<sup>4</sup> In like manner doctrine is found in Scripture, sometimes not in plain words, but "gathered thence by right and iust consequence, . . ."<sup>5</sup> It does not mean that the doctrinal

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 334.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 651. Ibid., II, p. 298.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 298.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., III, p. 105.

truth is of a lesser inspiration than the Scriptures themselves. On the other hand, a doctrine of the nature of Transubstantiation is denied not because the word is not in Scripture, but because it cannot be gathered by 'necessarie consequence'. The matter is just not there.

Againe, many refuse these doctrines, the proceeding of the holy Ghost from the Sonne; and the baptizing of children, because they are not expressed in the Scripture. But hence wee answer, that though they be not expressly set down in so many wordes, yet by iust consequence they may be soundly gathered out of Scripture, and therefore are true doctrines, no lesse to be beleueed, then that which is plainly expressed.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of Scripture is to bring men to true happiness, to fellowship with God, and life everlasting.<sup>2</sup> The Word of God possesses the power to fulfill the purpose through the working of the Holy Spirit. The Word is rightly used, when it is read, heard, and meditated. The Holy Spirit through the Word can "comfort all in distresses, and in the very pang of death, . . . conuerting the heart of man, making him in respect of righteousness, and holinesse, like vnto God."<sup>3</sup> This is the act of God and is indicative of His constant love for His children. He has given His Word to Man, 'most perfect and excellent'.

The Roman Catholics affirm "that the uniuersal consent of the Church is aboue Scripture, and giues life and sense there-

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 213.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 224. Ibid., III, p. 213.

to, . . ."<sup>1</sup> It is in essence the argument so prevalent after the Reformation between those who adhered to Scripture alone, and those who used tradition and the Church as equal authorities. The Church, Perkins believed, is not to be placed above the Scriptures. It is in essence the treasure house wherein the Word of God has been and is preserved through all ages, past and future, against God's enemies. Then, the Church affirms the truth of Scripture. "And thirdly, it publisheth the truth of Gods word by vertue of that ordinarie ministerie which God hath ordained therein."<sup>2</sup> If there had been no Scripture, there would have been no Church.

. . . the Word of God, the substance, sense, and truth thereof is much more auncient then the Church: yea, without the word of God, there can be no Church: For without faith is no Church (because the Church is a companie of believers) and without the word is no faith; therefore no word, no faith; no faith, no Church.<sup>3</sup>

#### C. Tradition

Perkins rejected tradition as a parallel with Scripture. Scripture as contained in the Old and New Testaments, is all-sufficient not only as far as doctrines are concerned, but also regarding the reforming of manners.<sup>4</sup> Tradition had its place in the development of his thought, however. Though he

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 213. Ibid., II, p. 303.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 216.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 16. Ibid., II, p. 303.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., I, p. 38.

scorned all authority except the Word of God, he used the ancient writings of Cyprian, Tertullian, and Augustine continually to support his arguments. For him, some of the non-canonical writings possessed a secondary authority. This is true of the great creeds of the Church, for the Creeds especially were reflections of the Apostolic teaching. They are, in substance, the Word of God and are to be believed. No Church or secular authority possesses power to alter the words or order, except by the consent of the entire Christian Church.<sup>1</sup>

If men speak the truths revealed in Scripture, their words are in essence the Word of God. In his suggestions on exegetical studies, he invariably spoke of the 'preacher of the Word'.

He possessed a wider appreciation for non-canonical works than many of his contemporaries. He had not veered so far from Romanism but that he believed Mary died a Virgin, even though there is no Scriptural evidence to support this view. Many traditions which were not contrary to the Word of God nor necessary for salvation were matters 'indifferent'. One could believe them as truth, revealed in the course of history. Apocryphal works were not considered on a par with the Scriptures as contained in the Protestant Bible.<sup>2</sup> Only those books

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, pp. 121-122. Ibid., I, pp. 302-303.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, pp 221-226. Sermon in the Mount.

currently found in the Protestant Bible are the true canon of Scripture,<sup>1</sup> because the truths found therein are sufficient for salvation. The true Apostolic concept of Scripture was that the Holy Spirit determines what constitutes God's Word.

The infallible and determining iudgment of al controuersies of faith is in Christs owne person, or in the holy Ghost so farre as he speaketh vnto vs in the Scriptures, canonically. He, saith Tertullian De praescript, sitteth at Gods right hand, but he hath sent his deputie namely, the power of the holy Spirit to worke vpon the hearts of the faithfull.<sup>2</sup>

## II - THE WORD AND CONSCIENCE

After the Word of truth has been brought to bear upon the conscience, one should approach the Word of God in a devotional spirit. God's Word must be read or studied with a 'humble heart'. A proud heart is so burdened and stuffed with conceit that there is no room therein for the Word of God. "But the heart that is lowly in it selfe, through the conscience of sinne, that is the heart in which the Lord by his grace will take vp his abode, . . ."<sup>3</sup>

One must approach also the Word of God with an honest heart, one which has no desire to live in sin, but possesses the sole aim and desire of pleasing God in every way. This cannot be attained, however, without the believing heart.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 511. "Canonicall scripture is a principle of Diuinitie deseruing credit of it selfe, and therefore not manifestable by any other exterior principle."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 511.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 214.



The Word of God and faith must be in everyone who believes in Jesus Christ as Savior. These two, the Word and faith, "must be mingled together, and then it will be a word of power, or life, and salvation."<sup>1</sup> So when the believer hears the threats of the Law, or the Gospel promises, he is obliged to resolve his heart to the truths of each. He must heed the Law and claim the promise. Finally, one must have a hearing heart, that is, one that is attentive to hear the Word of God and be at the same time pliable to be moved by the Word.

In the interpretation of the Word, mention has previously been made of the observing the true meaning and sense of the passage. There are further needs which evolve from the truth of the Word acting upon the conscience. One must know that he has truly experienced the Word of God. The experiences particularly referred to are the exercises of repentance, prayer in God's name, and the remembrance of God's Word in all our temptations.<sup>2</sup> These elements are essential in order that one may grasp the true interpretation of the Word of God. Thus, it seems that this interpretation of the Word of God is subjective. True, God's Holy Spirit is the Interpreter of Scripture, but He must work through the subjective experience of past remembrance in the individual's life. In a real sense, this subjectivism is a test of whether the Holy Spirit is

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 480.

working in the individual's life, interpreting the Word to him.

William Perkins held firmly to an inter-working between the Holy Spirit and the Christian's secret thoughts and desires. The result is that the Christian is able to evaluate how obedient he has been to the Word of God, and wherein he has transgressed it.

God's Word also acts upon the believer in another way.

Againe, in the word of God, there be both commaundements, and promises: The consideration of Gods commaundments is a notable meanes to direct, and moderate, not onely our word, and deedes, but also our secret thoughts and desires: for if before we thinke, before we will, or speake anything, we would first consider God commaunds vs to thinke, to will, and to speake thus and thus, this would mightily stay and suppress vs in all corrupt thoughts and desires, all euill words and actions. The promises of God likewise duly considered would greatly further vs in good thoughts: . . . The cause then why many that know the wil of God, so much faile in particular obedience, is because that with their knowledge, they do not ioyn this serious consideration of Gods commaundments, and promises, and apply the same to their occasions.<sup>1</sup>

The subjective experience encouraged obedience to the Word of God. It was not enough to be a hearer, but one must likewise be a doer of the same even in his vocational calling. By being a doer of the Word, a man will thereby be more proficient in his trade or business. If one constantly practices God's Word, the individual will then become proficient in the knowledge of God's Word and will be enabled to keep it in perfect memory.<sup>2</sup> The adaptation of the Word of God to daily

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 480.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 215.

living was a significant contribution of William Perkins to his generation, and one cherished by Christian believers to this hour. Professor Wright has correctly evaluated it.

Like other Puritans, Perkins looked upon the Bible as the ultimate authority in every matter concerning man's life, but he had an extraordinary capacity for adapting the wisdom of the Scripture to everyday needs, without falling into impractical ritualism. This ability is obvious in each of his works of practical theology, but especially evident in his Christian Oeconomie.<sup>1</sup>

### III - STUDYING THE WORD

The proof-text method of study was a prevalent means of approach to Biblical exegesis. Dr. Horton Davies suggests that this method became excessive and was brought to ridiculous extremes by certain Puritan exegetes.<sup>2</sup> Textual scrutiny was used to prove or disprove a multitude of clerical practices, as well as ecclesiastical discipline and conduct. Perkins was one against whom such a charge could be made, for occasionally he stretched or twisted Scripture passages to prove his thoughts. Invariably he changed prepositions in certain verses to make his arguments more potent. This may have been a common practice in that day. Each scholar could argue his point of change from the original languages since there was no science of textual criticism.

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, Louis B., "William Perkins, Elizabethan Apostle of 'Practical Divinity'", Huntington Library Quarterly, (Vol. III, No. 2, Jan. 1940, San Marino, Calif.), pp. 184-185.

<sup>2</sup> Davies, Horton, The Worship of the English Puritans, (Dacre Press, Westminster, 1948), p. 54.

Perkins' instruction to his readers was to study the Scriptures with great diligence. It involved shaking and sifting the Word. ". . . search narrowly, till the true force and meaning of euery sentence, yea of euery word and sillable; nay, of euery letter and lotte therein, be knowne and vnderstood: . ." <sup>1</sup> He further advised that passages be compared with like passages, comparing previous events with later happenings, word with word, and letter with letter. This was, in reality, the expression and setting forth of his own method and the great scrutiny with which he studied the Word.

Let all men, but especially students in diuinitie, consider this effect, of searching out the Scripture, as a spurre to diligence, in this behalfe. By this meanes also, errors and heresies are auoided and suppressed, and the will of God is plainly reuealed. <sup>2</sup>

One ought, then, to study the Scriptures with all diligence, to learn and love them, because the Word of God "is the law of spirituall libertie." <sup>3</sup>

Even these earnest admonitions were mingled with a sigh of frustration. After urging a thorough study of the Word of God, Perkins lamented,

But pittie it is to see, how reading the word of God is laid aside, for it is so little practised, that men now adaies will not be at charge to buy a Bible: for bookes of statutes, men will not onely haue them in their houses, but at their fingers ends; but Bible they haue none: and

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 37, Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 37, Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 540.

if they haue, it lieth on the deske or table, and they  
reade it not; and if sometime they read, yet they neuer  
meditate thereon, . . .<sup>1</sup>

#### IV - THE SPIRIT OF SATAN

The lack of study and knowledge of God's Word permits great flow of evil throughout society. One of the evils of Satan which flows in the wake of such lethargy is the abundance of false prophets. Perkins warned against them. With his warning went the unveiling of their deceits. He listed seven ways in which they can be recognized. Of particular interest is the first, the allegations of Scripture. False prophets invariably use Scripture as skillfully as the true prophet, and they thereby blind the eyes of those who follow in this way of falsity. Yet, in their uses of the Word of God, they deprave and change the true sense of the Word, and sometimes they

either adde to, or detract from the words, following rightly their master Satan, . . . who alleadged Scripture to Christ, but left out the principall point wherto the promise was made; namely, walking in thy wayes.<sup>2</sup>

The Romanists deal in this manner. Sometimes they distort the Scripture texts, or they alter its sense. Then again, they invariably leave Scripture and go to tradition, the Councils, and the Church Fathers. The Romanists are not the only ones who use and abuse the Word of God in this way.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III. pp. 104-105.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 237.

The Family of Love, and even the Anabaptists turn the natural sense of Scripture into mystical allegories.<sup>1</sup> These also are, in turn, false prophets.

The spirit of evil, that is, the power of Satan, was an ever present reality to the fifteenth and sixteenth century Christians. Sometimes Satan clothed Himself as a false prophet, and other times He is seen in the workings of the conjurers, witches, and prognosticators. All of these ardently worked against the believer and God's Word. They were in truth Satan's revelation of Himself, trying to draw the unwary from giving allegiance to God.

Witchcraft was of such great importance that William Perkins was impelled to publish a treatise on this 'black art', suggesting eighteen ways and means by which witches may be identified.<sup>2</sup> He maintained that it was perfectly permissible to use questions and torture, especially in obstinate cases, to bring about a confession of guilt.<sup>3</sup> The only penalty for practicing witchcraft was, of course, death.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, pp. 607-652. A Discourse on the Damned Art of Witchcraft. Cf. ibid., II, pp. 332-333.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 643.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, pp. 637, 638, and 639. This was before the Jacobean Statute which made witchcraft a capital punishment. A contemporary of Perkins, James Mason, agreed with this idea. His main thesis was that all magicians, witches, sorcerers, inchanters, and so forth were instruments of Satan. Cf. The Anatomie of Sorcerie, (John Legatte, London, 1612).

In this way, Perkins followed the conservative spirit of the times. In contrast, were the rationalists (of his day and particularly a generation later) who rejected the idea that witches were in league with Satan. Yet, so popular was Perkins' treatise on witchcraft that he helped establish the rules by which a witch may be convicted. In the mid-seventeenth century, Sir Robert Fulmer of East Sutton published a treatise against that of Perkins, condemning him because of his Scriptural misinterpretations. Fulmer said that Perkins' proofs of a witch must have been used to convince the juries of witchcraft in the Summer Assizes in Kent, (evidently in 1652) which concluded in mass slayings of witches.<sup>1</sup>

Perkins fought the spirit of evil on every hand. Witches were not his only target. He warned against those who prognosticate by stars, that is, astrologers. This was probably the reason for the publication in 1587 of Foure Great Lvers.<sup>2</sup> Condemnation of astrology had been a popular theme since the Middle Ages. In setting forth Foure Great Lvers, he faced the problem in a frontal attack. This was the first of a series of treatises against prognosticators written about this time.<sup>3</sup> So close was he to being drawn into the snares and temptations of mathematics and astronomy coupled with magic, that he devoted his early teaching days confronting such 'Satanic devices'

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<sup>1</sup> [Fulmer, Sir Robert], An Advertisement to the Jury-men of England, (I.O., London, 1653), Sig. A<sub>3</sub> recto ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Appendix II

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 609.

as divination, astrology, fortune-telling, wizardry, and even sleight of hand tricks and juggling because they involved deception.

He had no trouble illustrating how to use the Word of God in condemnation of these Satanic tricks. Condemned also were the devices of Roman Catholicism used to deceive people. In fact, he accused Romanism of conjuring.<sup>1</sup>

It is no doubt a truth, that with the awakening to Scripture following the Reformation and the establishing of the Word of God as the infallible rule, there was a revaluation of sin and the nature and source of evil. Satan was at war with the Word, and the human life was the arena. Satan could be defeated in the arena if the Word of God is permitted to act upon the conscience of the individual.

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<sup>1</sup> It is significant that though witchcraft had been a problem in Britain since the twelfth century there was a concerted attempt made by Perkins to parallel witchcraft with the Roman Catholic means of worship.



## CHAPTER VII

### AS A PREACHER

"... it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."<sup>1</sup>

This was the spirit of William Perkins, who desired above all to preach Jesus Christ, the only means for Man's salvation. His preaching introduced the new Theocentric and Christocentric emphasis. In reality, it was a return not only to the Bible as authority, but to the kerygma of apostolic preaching. Sir John Bickerton Williams briefly traced the history of preaching to Perkins' day. He concluded:

It would show, . . . that in the middle ages Scholastic 'niceties' nearly supplanted the Bible; that to the very dawn of the Reformation texts were taken out of Scotus or Aquinas, instead of the Scriptures; that when Luther, and Melancthon, and others, exemplified a better mode, [of sermon] [sic] the magistrates were petitioned for its suppression; and that in our own country, 'Master Perkins', a Puritan, who began to flourish about the year 1580, is thought to have been the first to restore it to its true use, and taught the true manner of it.<sup>2</sup>

Puritan preaching, for the most part, differed considerably from that of the conformists. It was not merely a difference of style. The Puritans refused to quote and rely on human authors. Instead, they depended wholly on Scripture. There was the difference "between witty and spiritual preaching so-called, between 'the Wisdom of Words' and 'the Word of

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<sup>1</sup> I Corinthians 1.21.

<sup>2</sup> Williams, Sir John B., Letters on Puritanism and Nonconformity, (Jackson & Walford, London, 1846), p. 62.

Wisdom, . . ."<sup>1</sup> The 'opening' of the Scriptures occupied a central place, therefore, in Puritan worship.<sup>2</sup> The Word of God was even above the Sacraments, since the Sacraments "were dramatic representations of the Word, . . ."<sup>3</sup>

The emphasis on spiritual preaching grew, and spiritual preachers increased in number and filled vacancies which were opened for them by an increasing popular interest. Pulpits in London and Cambridge were filled by these men. Perkins, occupying the lectureship at the Church of Great St. Andrew's, aided in the growth of the movement.<sup>4</sup> Professor Perry Miller

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<sup>1</sup> Haller, William, The Rise of Puritanism, (Columbia Univ., Press, New York, 1938), p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Davies, Horton, The Worship of the English Puritans, (Daore Press, Westminster, 1948), p. 182.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> Knappen, M. M., Tudor Puritanism, (Univ. of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1939), p. 221. Knappen presents some thoughts which clarify the relation of Perkins to both Christ's College and Great St. Andrew's Church. "Accordingly, that age saw nothing incongruous in having an extra clergyman attached to a parish for preaching duties alone. He might be a fellow of one of the colleges at the university, a minister beneficed elsewhere, or one solely charged with this responsibility. Perhaps he preached only on the Sunday, but often a discourse before the opening of the weekly market was added to his program. The surrounding country gentlemen made up his salary among them. If he happened to be regularly beneficed, his supporters gave him this as an additional material token of their esteem. Furthermore, the lay magistrates also made it their business to protect these preachers from being disturbed by the Anglican authorities, or, if they were troubled, maintained their cause in the face of persecution in the ecclesiastical courts. This device of special preacherships also made it possible, if worst came to worst, to take care of the deprived, as well as those unable to conform sufficiently to secure a regular living. The result was that not involve pastoral duties or the use of the Prayer Book.

tells us that "After Perkins's, The Art of Propheying (1631), with its emphasis upon plainness, . . . 'high style' fell into disrepute."<sup>1</sup> His was only a sample of the general spirit of sixteenth and early seventeenth century preachers who took the 'art' of preaching seriously, studying and preparing the entire week before delivery of the sermon.<sup>2</sup> As a general rule, they did not engage in hostility toward the Crown or the Established Church. "Rather, they generally professed loyalty to the regime, . . ."<sup>3</sup>

### I - HIS PREACHING

Perkins followed the major group of Puritans in his preaching emphasis. Yet, he possessed a rare and somewhat paradoxical combination of strictness and moderation. If these qualities seem antithetical and incongruous in the same person,

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Pious town corporations joined the gentry in the creation of these positions, and many of them had one or more lecturers of their own. The Inns of Court also set up their own lectureships. By 1571, the Temple, in fact, had two preachers, one for the Sunday morning and one for the afternoon. The private chaplains of the nobility were often no more than lecturers in disguise, since the family chapel was thrown open to the neighborhood when the weekly sermon was preached. In the course of time many of these lectureships became endowed after the fashion of pastoral posts before them. Within the memory of living men they survived in the quiet, delightful market towns of east counties."

<sup>1</sup> Miller, Perry & Johnson, T. H., The Puritans, (American Book Co., New York, 1938), p. 666.

<sup>2</sup> These traits exemplified Perkins. Hence, he was called 'Painful Perkins'. Cf. supra, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Haller, op. cit., p. 20.

observe what they involve. Perkins fought evil with a stern creed that called for action. He felt impelled to subdue those forces which corrupt the Church of Jesus Christ. Lukewarmness in Christian faith was to be scorned and complacency was abhorred.

Yet, he showed a moderation in his preaching. In his pulpit proclamations he had a fairminded, liberal spirit. He did not resort to an hedonist lack of restraint in his instruction regarding Christian conduct to the faithful throng in St. Andrew's Church.

He was mindful of the needs of each member of his congregation and preached concretely, facing the problems of his day. President Robert Worth Frank delivered some thoughts on Perkins' abilities.

His preaching and writing were distinguished for their keen insight into the human problems of his day and for their phenomenal skill in providing Christian clues to the solution of those problems. He did not dodge the present, either by lingering in past centuries as learned scholars are wont to do, or by that long-distance leap into the future which utopian enthusiasts are fain to make. He spoke to sixteenth century man's condition in Elizabethan England.<sup>1</sup>

His sermon style set him forth as a leading pulpit figure in his day. Historical accounts indicate that he was an eloquent preacher. He was not superficial, nor was he bombastic. He used no tricks, and did not resort to sham, or pulpit theatrics.

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<sup>1</sup> Frank, Robert Worth, "William Perkins, Puritan Minister," McCormick Speaking. (McCormick Theol. Seminary, Chicago, Vol. II, No. 9, June 1949), pp. 8-9.

He used legitimate means in guiding men in their business dealing, and the family in its conduct. It was done in a moving manner that was at the same time vivid and dramatic.

His preaching was Biblical and doctrinal. Expository preaching was a favorite means of expressing his thoughts culled from Holy Scripture. These thoughts were always practical. He made excellent use of illustrative material to clarify the more difficult thoughts. The illustrations were cleverly incorporated and were usually about people.<sup>1</sup> He practiced what he taught when he said that the sermon should conclude with an application suited "to the divers conditions of men and people."<sup>2</sup>

## II - HIS THOUGHTS ON PREACHING

His style and method of preaching can best be seen in his teaching, particularly in A Treatise Concerning the Only True Manner and Methode of Preaching. It has been said that

The typical Puritan minister . . . was a propagandist in the original sense of the word - one who transplants into others convictions which were living realities in his own personality, declaring what he had himself seen and handled of the word of life.<sup>3</sup>

These words are most applicable to William Perkins. He never spoke or wrote what he had not experienced.

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<sup>1</sup> This confirms Haller's description of Perkins as a sixteenth century William James. Cf. *supra*, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, William, Workes, (John Legatt, London, 1612), II, p. 665.

<sup>3</sup> Knappen, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

Though he rejected the Roman Catholic view of the priest as the deputy of Christ, he nevertheless had a very high regard for the ministry. Ministers "are no deputies [of Christ], [sic] but active instruments,"<sup>1</sup> especially for the preaching of the Word. This description of the ministry has further implications and support found in God's Word. The office of minister or apostle is first a "suiter to the Church, or to the soules of men, in the name of Christ, . . . to make the offer or motion in his name, of a spirituall marriage: and this is done in the ministrie. . . of the Gospell."<sup>2</sup> The office of the minister is also to make the 'contract' between the souls of men and Jesus Christ by the ministry of God's Word. Scripture serves to signify Christ's will for the believer and to stir the believer to respond by following His will. After the 'contract', the office of minister is to aid believers in maintaining true faith and a good life, "that they may be fit to be presented to Christ in the day of iudgment, and so be married to him eternally: for then, and not before, is the marriage of the Lambe."<sup>3</sup> To state it briefly, the goal or aim of the ministry is to make sinful men to become new persons in Christ.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 608.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 292.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 292.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 294.

The ministry of God's Word is necessary because it is the means of conferring His Spirit to guide and govern all believers in Christ. To make this thought more emphatic, he wrote:

"Further, let it be observed, what is the scope of all our hearing and teaching, namely, that we may receive the spirit of God: without which spirit, we can do nothing."<sup>1</sup>

The minister is also compared to a prophet. One of the evidences of a true prophet is the correct and 'wholesome' handling of Scripture. By wholesome handling of Scripture, he meant the right interpretation and the setting forth of its true sense. Also, he inferred that wholesome handling involved "due and sound collection of wholesome doctrine from the same, for the edifying of the Church both in sound judgement, and Christian life."<sup>2</sup>

The minister, like the true prophet, is known by his works. One evidence is the correct handling of the Word of God. Therefore, all who are in the Gospel ministry, must have this as their aim. He should become so skilled that truly expounded Scripture may become 'food' for men's souls. In this manner, Christ's Kingdom can be built. The true minister must use all the scholarship at his command so that Scripture may be rightly divided. Results can only be produced by faithful handling and performing the minister's duties. Those duties are not a work of ease.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 239. Cf. ibid., III, pp. 430-434. A minister is also an 'Angel'.

They are continual labors "like to the running of a race."<sup>1</sup>  
The office of the ministry, then, is not only to teach and to preach, but also to study and to observe the best manner of preaching.<sup>2</sup>

Ministers are warned that in carrying out the office they may be hated and persecuted, but they ought not to be troubled. The same hatred and persecution was visited upon the apostles even in Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup>

The primary and indeed the only matter with which preaching is concerned is the Word of God.<sup>4</sup> The preacher must be wary lest he miss the true purpose of his calling. The centrality of the Word in preaching involves the following of certain rules of interpretation. The manner of interpretation of Scripture depends largely on Scripture itself, particularly the passages to be studied. Passages may be either 'Analogicall' or 'Crypticall'. Analogical passages are plain or clearly understandable and have an apparent meaning which is in conformity with 'the analogie of faith', especially upon the initial inspection. "Concerning these places, receiue this rule: If the naturall signification of the words of the place propounded, doe agree with the circumstances of the same place, it is the proper meaning of the place."<sup>5</sup> One can make no mistake regarding doctrines

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 189. Cf. ibid., III, p. 343. Great learning is not essential to the ministry.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., I, p. 722. Cf. ibid., II, pp. 88-91; III, pp. 191, 237, 435.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 646, note.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., II, p. 654. Cf. ibid., II, p. 662.



of faith which are necessary for salvation. These are very clearly defined or delivered in the Word of God.

The cryptical passages are those "which are difficult and dark: . ." <sup>1</sup> A rule was given for expounding these dark places.

If the native (or naturall) signification of the words doe manifestly disagree with, either the analogie of faith, or very perspicuous places of the Scripture: then the only meaning, which is given of the place propounded, is naturall and proper, if it agree with contrary and like places, with the circumstances and words of the place, and with the nature of that thing which is intreated of. <sup>2</sup>

Doctrines are laid down as a result of the rightly dividing or 'cutting' of Scripture. Some doctrines are derived from passages which are most difficult to interpret. These doctrines may not be expressed, but must be implied by the text. "This is done by the helpe of the nine arguments, that is, of the causes, effects, subjects, adiuncts, dissentancies, comparatives, names, distribution, and definition. ." <sup>3</sup>

Application of doctrine found in Scripture is carried out according "as place, time, and person doe require." <sup>4</sup> This basis of application is the awareness of the place the doctrine is found, whether it be in the Law or in the Gospel. This knowledge is necessary because the applications of both Law and Gospel in preaching are quite different. It has been said previously that the Law reveals sin but presents no plan for

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 654.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 654.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 663.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 664.

conquering evil.<sup>1</sup> The Gospel has the solution to this problem.

The Gospel also has

The efficacy of holy Ghost adioyned with it, by whom beeing regenerated, we haue strength both to beleue the Gospell, and to performe those things which it commandeth. The Law therefore is the first in the order of preaching and the Gospel second.<sup>2</sup>

There are seven ways in which doctrine is applied. These depend entirely upon the seven states of people. The first type of people are the unbelievers. The minister must prepare them to receive the Gospel by argument or reasoning. Argument and reasoning are of value in order that thoughts and actions can be discerned properly. It also aids in admonishing them of some major sin, perhaps convicting them and making them to become 'teachable'. "When now there is hope that they are become teachable and prepared, the doctrine of Gods word is to be declared to them generally in some common tearmes, or ordinary points."<sup>3</sup> If they accept the doctrine of the Word of God, then the Word is to be opened to them clearly through teaching. If they "remaine vnteachable, without any hope of winning them, they are to be left."<sup>4</sup>

Another type are those who are 'teachable', but are yet 'ignorant'. The catechism, the foundation of Christian religion, is to be used with this type of person. There are also

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<sup>1</sup> Supra, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 664. Cf. ibid., III, p. 435.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 665.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 665.

some who have knowledge, but are not humbled. The minister should seek to stir them to repentance. It is not sufficient to be sorry because of calamity. It must be a bona fide grief because of sin and its nature that so infests their lives. The Law is to be used in arousing this sorrow. ". . . though it may not be a thing wholesome and profitable of its owne nature, yet is it a remedy necessarie for the subduing of a sinners stubbornnesse, and for the preparing of his mind to become teachable."<sup>1</sup>

After the Law has reaped its effect, then the Gospel is to be preached, permitting the Holy Spirit to work in souls of the hearers to bring about their salvation.

To the hard-hearted the Law must bee vrged, and the curse of the law must bee denounced with threatning, together with the difficulty of obtaining deliuerance vntil they be pricked in their heart . . .

But when the beginning of compunction doth appeare, they are presently to bee comforted with the Gospel.<sup>2</sup>

There are those who are already humble, but the minister must consider whether the humility is only begun, or whether they are completely humble. It is very important to observe the nature of the humility lest the minister give comfort instead of seeking for complete repentance. If the humility is only in part, the minister ought to preach the Law,

yet so discreetly tempered with the Gospell, that beeing terrified with their sinnes, and with the meditation of

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 666.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 666.

Gods iudgement, they may together also at the same instant receive solace by the Gospell. . .<sup>1</sup>

Those who are wholly humbled are to receive the doctrines of faith and repentance coupled with the 'comforts of the Gospell'.

Perkins held that some people are true believers. The Gospel is to be preached to these people, especially the doctrines of justification, sanctification, and perseverance. The Law is also to be preached. However, the curse of the Law is not to be emphasized. These people must be taught to bring forth 'fruits' of new obedience such as are fitting of their repentance. If the curse of the Law is stressed, it is to be urged against the sins which are remaining in the true believers. It is good, nevertheless, to stress the curse of the Law from time to time in order that the faithful can be stirred so that they may not abuse God's mercy by licentious living and also that they may be more fully humbled.

Others are classified as the fallen, namely, those who have strayed from the state of grace. They may be fallen either in faith or in manners. "Falling in faith is either in knowledge of the doctrine of the Gospell, or the apprehending of Christ."<sup>2</sup> The minister must point out the error and remonstrate against those who fall in doctrine. This is to be done by presenting the

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 666.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 667.

doctrine of repentance mingled with a Christian, brotherly spirit. Those who lose their faith in Christ must have the remedy applied in the Gospel showing that the succumbing to temptation is pardonable. They must be shown that the promises of Christ are for all men and none are excluded. Faith, which is the will to believe, must be placed before them as a challenge. Sin does not abolish God's grace, but illustrates it. When the believer falls in 'manners', it indicates that he has fallen by committing some actual sin.

To those that are fallen thus, forasmuch as grace remaining in respect of her vertue and habit may bee lost for a time in respect of sense and working; the law must be propounded beeing mixed with the Gospell: because a new act of sinne requires a new act (or worke) of faith and repentance.<sup>1</sup>

The last group referred to is a 'mingled' group of people. This type is found in the Churches. The minister can with this group, choose whether he desires to preach the Law or the Gospel. Those with hardened hearts may be pricked by the Law, whereas those with afflicted consciences could hear the Spirit speak through the Gospel.

Though Perkins was a staunch predestinarian, he nevertheless acted as though people's salvation depended totally upon his preaching God's Word. This is not a mere supposition. In his catechism he asked the question, "What outward meanes must we vse to obtaine faith, and all blessings of God which come

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 667.

by faith? A. The preaching of Gods word, and the administration of the sacraments, and praier."<sup>1</sup> This was followed by another thought, "Q. What is the vse of the word of God preached? A. First it breedeth. and then it increaseth faith in them which are chosen to salvation; but vnto them that perish it is by reason of their corruption, an occasion of their further damnation."<sup>2</sup> So important is preaching that when a minister pleads for repentance and presents the mercy of God, it is as though the Lord Himself is speaking.<sup>3</sup> The preaching of God's Word is a special means ordained by God for the applying of His mercy to men. This is in essence the true meaning of the Puritan prophecyng. Prophecyng was defined as "a publike and solemne speech of the Prophet, pertaining to the worship of God, & to the saluation of our neighbor."<sup>4</sup> This art is composed of two parts, the preaching of the Word, and the 'conceiving' of prayers. ". . . euery Prophet is partly the voyce of God, to wit, in preaching: and partly the voyce of the people, in the act of praying. . ."<sup>5</sup> So when the minister is preaching, he preaches in the name and place of Jesus Christ.

Preaching is not the only means whereby a person may be saved. The preaching and sacraments are the ordinary means

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., I, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 467.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 646.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., II, p. 646.

of proclaiming salvation. If these means fail, God can work extraordinarily to bring faith. The extraordinary means may "euen be by reports and rumors."<sup>1</sup>

So potent is the preaching of the Word of God that Satan's Kingdom will be broken down, not by Man's efforts by the sword of the flesh, but by the Sword of the Spirit.

So it is saide, that the man of sinne, euen Antichrist must be abolished: not by the power of Princes: yea let all the Princes and Potentates of the world do their best for him, yet his kingdom must down in Gods good time; for God will consume him with the breath of his mouth, and abolish him by the brightnesse of his comming, 2 Thes. 2.8. that is, by the preaching of the word, in the mouthes of his Ministers, who are men void of all worldly power and policie.<sup>2</sup>

It would be erroneous to believe that all that is preached is the Word of God. He is the foundation of the doctrine that is taught, but there are instances when one is permitted to speak his own thoughts in the sermon. However, the following warnings were given. It must be done sparingly and with caution. It must be done only when there is just cause to do so. Third, the word of men and the Word of God must be differentiated. They must not be mingled lest the Word of God "lose his grace and excellencie."<sup>3</sup> Finally, God's Word alone "must bee the foundation of the doctrine which is taught, and the word of man is too added, in respect of our infirmitie to giue light or to conuince."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> ~~Ibid.~~, III, p. 164.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 241.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 241.

Concerning the delivery of the sermon, two requirements are listed, the hiding of Man's wisdom, and the showing of the Spirit.

Humane wisdom must be concealed, whether it be in the matter of the sermon, or in the setting forth of the words: because the preaching of the word is the Testimony of God, and the profession of the knowledge of Christ, and not of humane skill: and againe, because the hearers ought not to ascribe their faith to the gifts of men, but to the power of Gods word. . .<sup>1</sup>

Human wisdom is barbarous and should be kept from the pulpit. A minister ought to study in the arts and philosophy. He ought also to have a variety of reading as background in preparing his sermon, "but he ought in publike to conceale all these from the people, and not to make the least ostentation. Artis etiam est celare artem; it is also a point of Art to conceale Art."<sup>2</sup>

To 'demonstrate the Spirit', the minister should so conduct himself in his preaching that even the unbelievers can realize that it is the Holy Spirit that is speaking, and not so much the minister. The minister's speech must be spiritual and gracious.

That speech is spiritual, which the holy Spirit doth teach. . . . And it is a speech both simple and perspicuous, fit both for the peoples vnderstanding, and to expresse the Maiestie of the Spirit. . .

Gracious speech is that wherein the grace of the heart is expressed. . .<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 670.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 670. Cf. ibid., II, p. 651. Perkins gave suggestions for keeping a 'common place book'.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, pp. 670-671.



The preacher is required to keep his homiletical expressions simple. He should not use words of art, nor Greek or Latin phrases. These tend to disturb the minds of the listeners, for such terms break continuity of thought. The telling of stories and all 'profane and ridiculous' speech must be omitted. The voice ought to be raised for all to hear, the body held erect and composed. ". . . all other parts, as the arme, the hand, the face and eyes haue such motions, as may expresse and (as it were) vtter the godly affections of the heart. The lifting vp of the eye and the hand signifieth confidence. . ."<sup>1</sup> It is of great value to use eloquent speech in delivery providing it is a holy, sanctified eloquence. "So, humane eloquence must be brought home to diuinitie, and be pared, and shaved with spirituall wisdome, and then may lawfully and profitably be vsed."<sup>2</sup> In his delivery of the sermon, the minister must not resort to flattery and a 'pleasing tongue'. ". . . this fire must be from Gods altar: that is, the fire of their zeale must be kindled by Gods spirit, and not by the spirit of discord and dissention."<sup>3</sup>

Eloquence can miserably fail unless the minister is familiar with the content of his sermon. It is customary to memorize the sermon and deliver it without the use of notes.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 672.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 93.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 456.

There are several means of observing the custom, but one way suggested is quite profitable. The minister is to imprint in his mind the 'proofes' or applications of the doctrines, the illustrations, and the order of the applications, "in the meane time nothing carefull for the words, Which (as Horace speaketh) will not unwillingly follow the matter that is premeditated."<sup>1</sup> Then, if the sermon itself is worthy, it can be legitimately preached often, "if he doe it not for ease to himselfe, but for the benefit of the people."<sup>2</sup>

The concern heretofore has been with the preaching of the Word in which the minister is the voice of God to the people. There is a further aspect of 'propheying' whereby a minister prepares the prayers or petitions in worship. In this, the minister is the voice of the people to God. The content of the prayers should be, first of all, for the wants and sins of the people, "and then the graces of God and the blessings they stand in neede of."<sup>3</sup> The kings and those in authority are to be considered in prayer. Also, "We pray for Emperours, for their ministers and powers, for the state of the time, for the quietnesse of their affaires, and for the delaying of their death."<sup>4</sup>

The form of the prayer was laid down. "Let there be one

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 670.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, p. 672.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 672.

voice, and that the Ministers alone, the people being in the means while silent, and shewing their assent at the end, by saying, Amen. . ."<sup>1</sup> The minister's voice is to be clear so that it is understandable. The delivery is not to be halting, but continuous. Idle repetitions must be avoided.

The service of worship is composed of four acts, 'doctrine of the Apostles', fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer.<sup>2</sup> The doctrine of the apostles has reference to the preaching of the Word of God. The preaching and praying are to be done in the method that is consistent with the Church of which the minister is a member,<sup>3</sup> as are the means of furthering the fellowship and the breaking of bread. The means is 'indifferent', but the goal is the salvation of men.

### III - ADVICE TO YOUNG MINISTERS

William Perkins' advice to young ministers and divinity students can be divided into three general headings, the requirements of pastors, their motives, and their labors. The first suggested requirement is that pastors must learn to be diligent for the furtherance of the salvation of their congregations. It is this diligence that has caused ministers to be called watchmen.<sup>4</sup> Another suggested requirement is an

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 672.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 707-708.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, pp. 2-3, Sermon in the Mount.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 492.

experiential knowledge of the truth that the minister delivers to others.

So euery Minister must see that he haue experience in him-  
selfe of that he teacheth others: and haue a tast of that  
in his owne heart which he would haue others seasoned with-  
all, else his teaching shall be colde.<sup>1</sup>

A minister must learn to shun the temptation of contempt toward people whom he may consider inferiors. The minister must serve most willingly in the spirit of love regardless of the social condition of the person whom he serves.<sup>2</sup> He must so furnish himself through consecrated study that he can teach plainly the basis and substance of the Gospel. The whole will and counsel of God concerning salvation is involved. The minister must be careful to notice any false teachers among his people and cause the Church as a whole to identify these false teachers. Having led his people from falsehood, he must strive "that the doctrine of the Gospell thus published, may edifie. This is the end of all teaching."<sup>3</sup> He must then pray earnestly for the members of his congregation that they may know and believe that which is taught to them out of God's Word.

One must not underestimate the calling to the ministry. Some people think it is a vocation of exemption and preferment. Some ministers have given it a poor reputation in cer-

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 492.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 454. Cf. ibid., III, p. 443.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 267.

tain instances. One who is in the ministry or contemplating entering it, ought to consider seriously the demands.

Whereas contrariwise, hee that aforehand casts his account what it will cost him to be a Minister, what he must vnder-take, what hee must loose, what hee is sure to finde, is so settled and resolved aforehand, as hee goeth through all dangers and contempts, with comfort, courage, and contentment.<sup>1</sup>

Young men may ask how they may know that they have been called by God to the Gospel ministry. They can know it if they possess three qualities, the testimony of their consciences, that they have the ability to do that which they desire and wish, and "The third is, the Ordination of the Church, which approoves & giues testimonie of their will and ability. Hee that hath these things, is certainly called of God."<sup>2</sup>

Students who are preparing for the ministry of the Word ought to study with greatest diligence in order that they may become true ministers and "able Interpreters, and not too long to sticke in those studies, which keepe a man from the practise of this high function; . . ."<sup>3</sup>

If a minister desires to be a faithful deliverer of the Word, he must be moved by three qualities, love toward the Church to which he is called, a 'readie minde' to try to encourage assurance of salvation of each member of the Church,

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 434.

and faithfulness in service.<sup>1</sup> The latter quality demands the seeking of God's presence and being assured that He is always at hand.<sup>2</sup> Coupled with this is a need for the knowledge of God's Word in order to know and to meet heresy. Further, "he can neuer soundly doe without good vnderstanding in the text itselfe."<sup>3</sup> These motivations enable him to be a better minister of the Gospel of Christ.

The labors of a minister ought to be so continued that his message of the Gospel of Christ will live even after his death, "that so Gods Gospel and religion going on from hand to hand, and from person to person, might encrease from time to time. . ."<sup>4</sup> He should follow Christ's example by ministering not with outward pomp or by his own abilities alone, but by the truth and soundness of the doctrine he proclaims for the sole glory of God and the spiritual welfare of men. In proclaiming sound doctrine, he must learn to teach in a spiritual manner, not as though he was giving a philosophical lecture. Preaching is a spiritual duty which cannot be performed by natural gifts alone. "And indeed this is that teaching which saues the soul and affects the heart of him that belongs to God; which is the thing that euery minister of Gods word ought to labour for."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 491.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 450.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 392.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 128. Cf. ibid., III, p. 263 and 454.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., III, p. 263.

One of the most important duties of a minister is to sustain contacts with people in spiritual need. People should be encouraged to come to the pastor if they need guidance or are burdened by sins. They should come even if they are upset in conscience or need his prayers.

. . . great blessing and comfort doth doubtlesse followe them that vse this godly practise, and the want of it, is cause that a Minister cannot discerne and state euen of his owne flocke, nor can complaine to God of their pollutions, and confesse their sinnes so particularly, as would bee good both for him and them.<sup>1</sup>

In hearing the confessions of his parishioners and praying for their forgiveness, the minister should at the same time plead to God for his own forgiveness. Invariably the minister is an accessory in the sins of his people because of his evil example, or because he did not condemn the sins of his people or try to prevent the sinning.<sup>2</sup>

The choice of the field of service is always a problem to young men entering the ministry. Perkins' advice is worthy to be observed even in the present day.

It may be therefore good counsell to all godly Ministers in the placing and disposing of themselves, not to enquire onely how good a liuing such and such a place is; how well seated, how healthfull, & beneficiall it will be, (which are alas the common and almost the only questions now a dayes,) but principally to regard what a people they bee, and how affected, amongst whom they are to liue: if godly and well disposed, or at the least tractable and gentle, and willing to be taught, then lesse to regard other in-commodities: . . .<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 446.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 445.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 447.

After the minister has found his place of service, it is best that he be present with the people in order that he may better know their conditions of living. ". . . and certainly if it bee a Ministers dutie to confesse to God the pollutions of his people, then wilfull and carelesse Non-residence, and all absence, without iust & conscionable causes, must needes be a foule and fearefull sinne."<sup>1</sup> He cannot have a general oversight of his congregation and really know his people unless he lives among them. There are certain conditions whereby non-residency or absence from the area of service is permitted. It is permissible if there is sickness in the minister's immediate family, or if the Church grants absence because of the necessity of public service. Then again, persecution may cause an enforced absence.<sup>2</sup> Only in these cases did Perkins believe non-residency of a minister is permissible.

Young ministers must not be afraid of temptations that come their way. The minister should be prepared to receive them. We learn from Christ's temptations that there is a virtue in being tempted by Satan and then overcoming temptation. The values of being tempted are, first, in order that the minister may know what temptations mean. In the second place, by experiencing temptation he is able to more fully help and comfort those who are tempted. Third, he is able to

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 446. Cf. ibid., III, p. 445; and I, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., I, p. 55.



make them to rightly understand God's Word; "for many places of Scripture cannot so wel be vnderstood by bare study onely, as by temptations therewithal: & it is true which one saith wel, Reading, meditation, prayer, & temptation make a diuine." <sup>1</sup>

The minister who succumbs to temptation, however, by living a scandalous life among his people, "a heauie burden and a hard account lyeth on that Minister, and no rebuke is too rough, no punishment too great, no censure too sharpe for him." <sup>2</sup> Even lighter sins in the minister's life can cause an unprofitable ministry to his people. He must bear the people's sins because he causes the people to be submitted to his evil example and thereby be smitten with 'spiritual blindness'. So the minister ought to sanctify his own life before he can rebuke sins in other people. <sup>3</sup>

A minister who has fallen to the point where he has failed to live a life suitable to his calling 'seldome or hardly recouers'. This is because he lacks a teacher to instruct him as he tries to instruct his people. Also, the Word in such a minister is 'vnsauoury', and there is no other ordinary means to season him. <sup>4</sup>

A final warning is given.

. . . all Ministers learne here not to content themselves with the name and title of Ministers, but labour for the

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., II, p. 372.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 448.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 450.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III, p. 25, Sermon in the Mount.

substantiall ornaments thereof, nor to be willing to take the honour and livings, and to refuse the burthen and duties of the Ministrie.<sup>1</sup>

Ministers must be certain that they possess a tender conscience, thus enabling them to examine their own lives carefully. This is necessary so that in 'godly wisdom' the individual minister might deprive himself of something he might have, lest "his libertie be an occasion of euill to others; . . ."<sup>2</sup> He must abstain from the smallest sins so that his calling may not be blemished and his conscience burdened.<sup>3</sup> Then will his ministry be effective for Christ's glory.

If the minister observes Perkins' The Summe of the Summe, he cannot go amiss in his ministry in the pulpit or in his study. "Preach one Christ, by Christ to the praise of Christ."<sup>4</sup> This is what Perkins believed is a summary of preaching for the Godly minister.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins, op. cit., III, p. 458.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., III, p. 444.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., III, p. 443.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, p. 673.

## CHAPTER VIII

### HIS IMPORTANCE AND INFLUENCE

Time seems to dim the events of the past centuries so that the prominent persons and happenings of those years are lost for the most part to current generations. This is true of the life, thought, and activity of William Perkins. However, an attempt has been made in these pages to recall from past obscurity the mind and spirit of this man through analysis of his thought and its application.

#### I - AN EVALUATION

One can hardly fail to note that he was the bridge between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Though he lived mostly in the sixteenth century, he was ahead of his time. This is always true of great men. It was mainly after his death that men began to realize how applicable his thoughts were to Christian living. It was then that his works were collected, translated, and printed in many editions.

Though he was in essence a part of the seventeenth century, he still possessed certain medieval concepts. It was a horrible thing to permit the heretic freely to express his views, or the atheist and the witch to live. This is not because he was afraid that freedom would permit Satan to advance through society like a giant tidal wave. It was because he was such a

sincere lover of the truth. Never did he fear the absolute victory of Satan. Instead, he desired that men live and work toward a more godly society. If there is a summary for Perkins' thought and activity, it is this. He lived and worked for a truly Christian society within the framework of the nation, and he longed that others do likewise. This conviction is what urged him to be the master popularizer that he was. It also inflamed him to preach and write with such energetic, evangelical emphasis. He did not work for a cataclysmic, revolutionary process in society. His constant refrain was that the smallest, most microscopic element of faith in the human soul was sufficient for God's Holy Spirit to work. The process of regeneration can be started as soon as Man feels the slightest need to be saved. As with the transforming of society, so the changing of the individual life need not come through a soul-shaking experience of grace. Perkins said that the transformed life comes through a tiny seed planted in the soul. The soul then cultivates and nourishes it until faith takes over the life of that individual.

The process is the same in society. As the Christians live true, consecrated lives by applying the doctrine to their individual lives, so society can be changed. The Christian lives of a few believers, coupled with the preaching of the Word of God, can conquer the Satanic evils that infested the national life of that day, because others would repent and

believe in Christ also. In this way doctrine and practical living cannot be separated. Christianity in England was not what the Church of Rome said it ought to be, but what the voice of God said it was, speaking through the true preacher of His Word.

Mention has been made that there was little that was new or original in Perkins' thought.<sup>1</sup> This was due to two reasons. He was firmly convinced that the truth of God had been revealed in His Word. That the doctrines of Calvin to which he adhered were the last word in the interpretation of God's revealed truth, was evident. There was no need to search further. The second reason is that he was convinced the Protestant Church must consolidate and clarify its gains. This was, no doubt, the reason for his strong emphasis on Calvinistic doctrine and his anti-Roman bias. Knappen, discussing Puritans in general, expressed a thought most applicable at this point.

To doubt this new-old Protestant system, to indulge in curious searchings or vain imaginations, after the Anabaptist and Arian fashion, was to hinder the true cause - in other words, the cause of truth. So, in the interests of the truth, these false teachers must be put down. The press must be censored, school-teachers licensed, Catholics and other heretics punished.<sup>2</sup>

Though there has been some objection by scholars to the one-sided Puritan emphasis on morality "as failing to satisfy the ideal of a well-rounded man, the natural goal of all

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<sup>1</sup> Supra, p. 156. Cf. p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Knappen, M. M., Tudor Puritanism, (Univ. of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1939), p. 466.

human striving,"<sup>1</sup> it seems that the Puritan emphasis, one-sided as it was, was necessary not only to counteract the immorality of that time, but corresponded to the conditions of developed, civilized society generally. These moral specialists were an integral part of civilization. That is what set Perkins apart from the other churchmen. His emphasis was beyond the ordinary. It was not just different. It represented an earnest striving for higher ethical standards which cannot be shunned in any civilized society. "He was typically English in that he was bored by too intricate speculation on a purely theoretical plane, and that he wanted results."<sup>2</sup>

In his zeal to make doctrine applicable to life, William Perkins neglected, as did Puritans generally, to put the doctrines in such terms as are understandable to children. Evidently, there was little concern as to whether the children understood the catechisms or not. The main thing was that they must know verbatim the doctrines that were taught to them. "Apart from the fact that catechisms are logical rather than psychological in their presentation, they frequently were couched in language and embodied ideas foreign to childish experience."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Knappen, op. cit., p. 346.

<sup>2</sup> Miller, Perry, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity", Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Vol. xxxii, (Boston, 1937), p. 255.

<sup>3</sup> Fleming, Sanford, Children and Puritanism, (Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1933), p. iii.

This is not only true of Perkins', but also John Robinson's supplementary catechism, and other catechisms published in England and New England in the early seventeenth century.

## II - HIS INFLUENCE

The results of his thought and activity can be seen by his influence on the immediately succeeding generations. Some suggestions of his influence have previously been made. There are many more which cannot be examined in this study. However, it is certain that he played a great part in determining the trend of Puritan thought in the sixteen hundreds.

### A. His Influence in England, Scotland, and on the Continent

The most eminent of Perkins' disciples was William Ames, who used Perkins' theology as the basis for his own. His Medulla Sacrae Theologiae became the standard textbook in England, the Continent, and in New England. Professor Perry Miller says of Ames:

He was the friend and often the master of many of the New England divines, and I have elsewhere claimed for him that he, more than any other one individual, is the father of the New England Church polity.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Ames even paid tribute to the memory of Perkins, his revered teacher, as an expression of his gratitude. Ames' treatise, De Conscientia, was to a great extent modelled after Perkins' Cases of Conscience. This was not the only indication of

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<sup>1</sup> Miller, op. cit., p. 256.

Perkins' influence. Ames

bears emphatic testimony to the widespread influence which those [Perkins] [sic] discourses, by virtue of the permanent impression which they produced on those audiences, afterwards exerted throughout England. He then proceeds to relate how, after he had quitted England for the Continent, he could not fail to notice in the Protestant Churches abroad, - albeit pure in faith and discipline, a notable want of like systematic doctrinal teaching, and how he resolved accordingly to attempt to introduce some elements of such teaching, at least among those who were studying for the ministry.<sup>1</sup>

Much could be said about Perkins' influence on John Robinson. Perkins was public catechist at Christ's College at the time that Robinson entered Cambridge University at the age of seventeen. Robinson not only came under his teaching but also his spirit-filled preaching at Great St. Andrew's Church in the afternoons. John Robinson stated that his own conversion was brought about in the Church of England. It was probably under the influence of Perkins, especially when one observes that six years after his conversion he published a catechism, An Appendix to Mr. Perkins His Six Principles of the Christian Religion.

Robinson was deeply indebted to Perkins for the general structure of his scheme of religious thought and his interpretation of Christianity. The fact that Arminius had assailed Perkins 'with some acrimony' would act as a spur to Robinson in his chivalrous championship of the Calvinistic cause against the Arminians in the University of Leyden in later years.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Newhouse, a friend of Robinson's and a member of

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<sup>1</sup> Mullinger, J. Bass, The University of Cambridge from the Royal Injunctions of 1535 to the Accession of Charles I, (Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1888), II, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Burgess, Walter H., John Robinson, Pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers, (William & Norgate, London, 1920), p. 48.



Robinson's circle at Cambridge likewise owed a debt of appreciation to the influence of William Perkins upon his life.<sup>1</sup>

Newhouse graduated from Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1590, just about the time that Perkins was becoming quite popular.

Robert Bolton, who became a Puritan and a follower of Perkins' casuistry, testified before he became a Puritan that he found Perkins to be 'a barren empty fellow'.<sup>2</sup> After his conversion he thought Perkins to be a 'plain' but 'sound and substantial' preacher.

Another pupil of William Perkins who was a noted Puritan in his youth was Samuel Ward. Though Ward fell away from the Puritan position on ecclesiastical discipline and organization, he maintained his doctrinal Calvinism that he had received from Perkins. Perkins' casuistry, no doubt, had a great influence upon his entire life, for while he was a student at the University of Cambridge, he wrote in his diary:

May 22, 1595. My prid, which I took in every little action. My negligence in stirring up my brethren in Christianity. My cowardice in Christianity in exhorting others to the same. My fighting with S. J. [apparently for a short time the roommate of Ward and Sharp but unidentifiable] as we went to bed and my exandescencia agaynst him in wordes before.

May 23, 1595. How I could not gett out of myself no good meditations agaynst pride. Of my thought of prid in Mr. Pirkins chamber. The good will that Mr. Pirkins shewed me. My sleeping without remembring my last thought, which should have bene of God.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Burgess, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Haller, Wm., The Rise of Puritanism, (Columbia Univ. Press, New York, 1938), p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> Knappen, M. M., Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries, (Amer. Society of Church History, Chicago, 1933), p. 104.

After William Perkins' marriage in 1595, at which time he was obliged to forfeit his fellowship,<sup>1</sup> Samuel Ward wrote this prayer in his diary.

July 5, 1595. . . . Good Lord, graunt that now after Mr. Pirkins departure. . . ther follow no ruyne to the colledg, seying that some of the fellows begin to use such pollicy without any care of the future good of the colledg.<sup>2</sup>

Two years later Ward listed among his benefits: "2. That in Mr. Perkins] his time I should be here."<sup>3</sup>

Finally, in 1602, Ward wrote in his diary from his deep sorrow:

Oct. 21, 1602 [fol. 190b] The day before Mr. Perkins, dyed Mr. Hook, [a fellow of St. John's] a man very well fitted for God's Church, a great loss, but greater in that it was joyned with the loss of Mr. Perkins.

Oct. 22, 1602 - Consider the great blow given to the Gospel of Christ by the death of Mr. Perkins, who by his doctrine and his life did much good to the youth of the university, of whom he was had in great reverence, and who likewise did exceeding much good by his advice and direction to many Ministers in the Country, who did resort unto him from everywhere. His life was most unblameable and upright, he was very sparing in censuring any man, very wise and discreet in his carriage, very humble and meek. In his sickness, being in great extremity by reason of the stone, he was most quiet and patient, and when it was motioned unto him as he was putting out his hand, what he wanted, he answered, 'Nothing but meroy'. On Wednesday the 2nd of October, when I was with him, he willed me to pray for him. God knows his death is likely to be an irrecoverable loss and a great judgment to the university, seing there is none to supply his place. . . .<sup>4</sup>

Perkins' influence was not limited to his generation. Job Orton, who proudly claimed blood relation to Perkins, expressed

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<sup>1</sup> Supra, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Knappen, Two Elizabethan Diaries, op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

his interest in Perkins' writings, and advised young ministers to read his works, "as they would find large materials for composition."<sup>1</sup>

Scotland also shared the influence of this great man. Jaffray of Kingswell, Alexander Brodie of Brodie, and Johnston of Wariston, all laymen, displayed interest in Perkins' works.<sup>2</sup> The ministers of Scotland also found his writings extremely helpful, especially his Art of Propheying.<sup>3</sup> David Calderwood's Altare Damascenum makes reference to Perkins among writers of the various English schools of thought.<sup>4</sup> John Strang of Glasgow, in his de Voluntate Dei, among the countless references, found Perkins' thoughts of value in his dispute with Samuel Rutherford.<sup>5</sup>

Among the various results of Perkins' preaching upon England, two are obvious. He introduced a period of dynamic pulpit preaching. "After Perkins, the stream of spiritual preachers rapidly rose to flood."<sup>6</sup> The other was the potency of his preaching. Heppe indicated that whole towns in England were seized by the strength of his casuistry, and it even spread to distant lands.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Orton, Job, Letters to a Young Clergyman, (J. & W. Eddowes, Shrewsbury, 1791), pp. 39-40.

<sup>2</sup> Henderson, G. D., Religious Life in Seventeenth-Century Scotland, (Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1937), pp. 117-118.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 128-129.

<sup>6</sup> Haller, op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>7</sup> Heppe, H., Geschichte des Pietismus und der Mystik in der Reformierten Kirche, (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1879), p. 27.

Generations later his influence had waned little. Even Richard Baxter showed appreciation for the influence of Perkins' works upon his life. On many family book shelves in England his treatises were included with such works as Calvin's and Luther's writings. These treatises were invariably placed in prominent places in private libraries.

We learn that Bishop William Bedell purchased Perkins' library. This was significant, "for Perkins own works became one of the standard authorities of the puritanically affected, and his 'Art of Propheying' . . . became a notable ars concionandi among such [faithful ministers]."<sup>1</sup> It was this, perhaps, that helped Bishop Bedell gain the reputation as a noted preacher.

Perkins' works were included among books for the crews of the ships of the English merchant fleets.

The East India Company saw to it that ships were amply provided with edifying reading matter. The essentials were a Bible and a Book of Common Prayer, John Foxe's Book of Martyrs, and frequently the works of the famous Cambridge divine, William Perkins.<sup>2</sup>

#### B. His Influence in America

Early New England writings lead one to believe that William Perkins was a towering figure among the Puritan thinkers on that side of the Atlantic. The most important New Englander who was greatly moved by and exemplified the spirit of William

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<sup>1</sup> Mitchell, W. Fraser, English Pulpit Oratory from Andrewes to Tillotson, (Soc. for Promotion of Christian Knowledge, London, 1932), p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Wright, Louis B., Religion and Empire, (Univ. of No. Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1943), p. 71.

Perkins was John Cotton. While a student at Cambridge, Cotton came under the spell of Perkins' preaching, but resisted the appeal to dedicate himself to Christ. It is reported that when he heard the bell toll at the great preacher's death, he secretly rejoiced that Perkins' voice would no longer trouble his conscience.<sup>1</sup> It was not until he heard Richard Sibbes preach some time later on the subject of regeneration that he was converted. He testified that the preaching of William Perkins laid the ground work.

In his younger days, Cotton had been one of those whose hearts the oratory of the great preacher of Christ's College had momentarily touched and melted. But for a moment only: he soon resumed his former indifference, and even began to regard with feelings akin to dislike the orator whose eloquence had moved him from wonted self-complacency, . . .<sup>2</sup>

Also, William Perkins' catechism played a large part in the education of children in New England during Cotton's time.

On August 1, 1669, Robert Finney and Ephraim Morton were elected deacons and ordained. The catechism adopted by Robinson was then still in use, for under date November 1669 we read, 'began catechizing of the children by the pastor (constantly attended by the ruling elder) once a fortnight, the males at one time and the females at the other. The Catechism then used was composed by the Rev. William Perkins.'<sup>3</sup>

There is evidence to believe the Indian children of New England learned Perkins' catechism in their own tongue, if Increase Mather's statement is true.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mullinger, op. cit., II, p. 480.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 480.

<sup>3</sup> Burgess, op. cit., p. 362.

<sup>4</sup> Wright, Louis B., "William Perkins, Elizabethan Apostle of 'Practical Divinity'", (Huntington Library Quarterly, Vol. III, no. 2, January, 1940, San Marino, California), p. 194.

John Cotton's ministry in New England was largely influenced by his study of William Perkins' works. This is particularly evident in a letter he wrote to Lord Say and Seal in the year 1636.<sup>1</sup> One might mention also the part that the Cambridge preacher's Art of Prophesying played in the pulpit style of Cotton and the other New England preachers. Cotton had mentioned that "one great reason why there came so many excellent preachers out of Cambridge, in England, more than out of Oxford, in some former days, was the ministry of Mr. Perkins in that university."<sup>2</sup>

In 1698, William III presented a gift of books to King's Chapel in Boston. Among these he included were the three folio volumes of Perkins' Workes. If one examined inventories of early New England libraries, some of the commonest books that were listed were Perkins' Workes. Men like John Winthrop, even to the time of Jonathon Edwards, studied these works with a popular approval.

These works were not limited to the New England colonies alone. Inventories of Virginia libraries also listed his writings, clearly indicating that even the Anglicans of the southern colony found his writings most practical.

In 1620, when plans were being made for a university at Henrico, Virginia, an anonymous benefactor presented four great books, one being St. Augustine's City of God, and the other three, the collected works of William Perkins.

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<sup>1</sup> Miller, Perry, & Johnson, T. H., The Puritans, (The American Book Co., New York, 1938), p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> Wright, Louis B., "William Perkins, . . .", op. cit., p. 194.

These books were the foundation stones of higher education in the colony. A century later rich planters like Robert Carter of Corotoman still owned, and doubtless still read, the writings of the famous divine.<sup>1</sup>

Much more could be said regarding his influence, but enough has been presented to give this man a place in history. He played a significant role in the molding of our heritage, yet he lies almost forgotten. One can speculate why he went down to obscurity, but the task of those who find values in his works is not only to restore him to the 'Puritan Hall of Fame', but to a significant place in the history of our faith as one who applied Christianity to life in every aspect and made it work.

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, Louis, B., "William Perkins, . . .", op. cit., p. 194.

## APPENDIXES



## APPENDIX I

### EXTRACT CONCERNING PERKINS' TRIAL BEFORE THE VICE-CHANCELLOR<sup>1</sup>

Complaint was made unto me of Mr. Perkins of Christs Colledge, that in a common place made by him the 13th of Januarye, in the same Colledge, before the celebration of the Supper, he noted this as a corruption in our Church, that the Minister both receave the bread & wine, not at the hands of another Minister, but doth take it himselfe. That to kneele when we receave the Sacrament is superstitious & Antichristian; & that another corruption it is to turne our faces toward the East.

JOHN COPCOT

The sayd Mr. Perkins was called to answeare the 19th of January before the Vicechancellour, Mr. D. Perne, Mr. D. Bell, Mr. D. Goad, Mr. D. Norgate, Mr. D. Betts, Mr. Barwell, en Mr. Nevill. Where denying to answeare sufficiently, unlesse he might knowe his Accusers, it was thought mete to examine some of that Colledge that heard him, upon other othes Whereupon were called Mr. Bradocke, Mr. Osborne. Mr. Banes, & Mr. Bainbridge, unto whom these Interrogatories were ministred:

1. Whiter Mr. Perkins in his common place made at the tyme before mentioned did teach that it was a corruption in

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<sup>1</sup> Baker MS Collection, Cambridge University Library, Vol. XXX, pp. 292-293.

our Church, that the Minister did not receive at the hand of another minister, because that which is used in our church is without warrant of the word?

2. Whither he did name kneeling when we receive the Sacrament, superstitious, & Antichristian?

3. Whither he did note kneeling toward the East to be a corruption among us?

Mr. Osborne ad 1mum Res. that he heard it not, for he was not at the beginning

Ad 2dum Resp. Affirmative

Th. Osborne

Ad 3um Resp. Affirmative

Mr. Bradocke. Ad 1mum Resp. Affirmative

Thomas Bradocke

Ad 2mum Resp. Affirmative

Ad 3um He dothe not well remember, whither he spake of kneeling toward the East, or of setting the Communion Table that waye.

Mr. Banes, ad 1mum Resp. He did speak of that, but doth not remember what attributes he gave unto it.

Ad 2dum Resp. Affirmative

Robert Baines

Ad 3um Resp. Affirmative

Mr. Bainbridge, ad. 1mum Resp. Affirmative

Ad 2dum. He thought our Saviour did sitt, & it was better to come neerer unto that which he did, then unto that which was used in tyme of Popery.

Ad 3um He noted that it might be better otherwise then to Knele toward the East.

Cuthbert Bainbrigg

Mr. Perkins his common place so endorsed.

Whereas this doctrine of fayth & a good conscience is to be applyed to the Congregation, it is by Gods providence so come to passe, that I must applye it unto my self.

I am thought to be a Teacher of erroneous doctrine. I am enjoyned to satisfye, & in truth I am most willing with all my hart to do yt.

Of ministring the Communion unto a Mans on selfe, this was my opinion, that in this place it was better to receive from another, because we are 13: Ministers, & by this meanes the minister not only receiveth the Sacrament, but also receveth an approbation from his Brother, that he is a worthy Receaver.

It is sayd, that I sayd, this Action was unlawfull & a corruption of our Church. I sayd it not, & truly I protest before God, that if I sayd it, the same tong which did say it, should unsay it, that God might have the Glory, & shame & confusion might be unto me.

I sayd not that kneeling was Idolatrous Antichristian, I do renounce it. My opinion was this, that of the 2: postures which are used, sitting & kneeling, sitting is more convenient, because Christ sat, the Pope he kneeleth. Iuell [Jewell] contra Hardinge. And in things indifferent, we must go as far as we can from Idolatry. This Mr. Calvin taught me in a Sermon upon the 7: of Deut. Bucer Censur. Lit.

I am of this mind, that I think a man may use it with a

good conscience, for I am far from condemning any. And I beseeche you, how can we altogether cleare our selves, which sitting before, fall down of our knees, when the bread cometh, and having receaved it rise up agayne, & so do in like manner unto the wine.

I hold loking into the East or Weast to be indifferent & to be used accordingly: but this I mervell at, whye the Crosse standeth still in the window. & why we turne our selves toward the end of the chappell, at the end of the first & second Lesson. We are commanded to flye every shoue of Evill.

These things I have sayd to satisfye every man in this Congregation & to shoue that I despise not Authoritie; which yf this will doe, God be praysed, yf not, Gods will be done.

I confess most freely this thing. I did not seek the disquit of this Congregation: yet that I might have spoken them at a better tyme more convenient.



## APPENDIX II

### AUTHORSHIP OF FOURE GREAT LYERS (1585)

By Hugh G. Dick

Transactions of the Bibliographical Society, Second Series

"The Library" 4th Series, Vol. 19, 1938 - 1939

edited by F. C. Francis

Published by Humphrey Milford, London, 1939

Among the works of unknown authorship listed in the "Short-Title Catalogue" is a small octavo volume entitled "Foure Great Lyers, Striuing who shall win the Siluer Whetstone. Also, A Resolution to the Countri-man, prouing it vtterly vnlawfull to buye or vse our yeerly Prognostications. Written by W. P."<sup>1</sup> The volume, though undated, was published in 1585.<sup>2</sup> Two attempts to identify the author of this work have been unsatisfactory. The compilers of *Athenae Cantabrigienses* ascribe the tract to William Parys (d. 1609) but offer not the slightest proof of his authorship.<sup>3</sup> J. P. Collier, on the other hand, assigns the work to William Painter, who had declared himself against astrology as early as 1560 by his translation of William Fulke's "anti-

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<sup>1</sup> Such is the title of the copies in the Huntington Library and the British Museum. See E. F. Bosanquet, *English Printed Almanacks and Prognostications* (1917), pp. 49-50.

<sup>2</sup> Bosanquet, *op. cit.*, p. 49. The evidence for the correctness of Bosanquet's dating, an allusion to Richard Harvey's *Astrological Discourse* (1583) as having been published two years earlier, is presented by Rene Pruvost, 'The Astrological Predictions of 1583,' *The Library*, Fourth Series, XIV (1933), 104-5.

<sup>3</sup> C. H. & Thompson Cooper, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, ii (1861), 529. This ascription is accepted, but only provisionally, in Gordon Goodwin's account of Parys, *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, XV, 433-4.

prognosticon".<sup>4</sup> But Collier produces no evidence to support his contention. Furthermore, if Painter were the author of *Foure Great Lyers*, the first part of which ridicules the disparate weather forecasts of the almanac-makers, he must have changed his opinions somewhat, for nowhere in his translation of the *Antiprognosticon*, to which he freely added material of his own, are such prophecies derided.<sup>5</sup>

New light has recently been thrown on the problem. In his article on 'Some English Mock-Prognostications' in the June (1938) issue of "The Library", Professor F. P. Wilson writes concerning "*Foure Great Lyers*": 'In the copy at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, the work is attributed to William Perkins, in a hand which the Librarian, Dr. J. G. Milne, identifies as that of 'William Fulman', the seventeenth-century antiquary and divine.<sup>6</sup> Fulman's ascription can be supported, I believe, by further evidence.

As is indicated by the full title of the work, '*Foure Great Lyers . . . Also a Resolution to the countri-man . . .*

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<sup>4</sup> J. P. Collier, "A Biography and Critical Account of the Rarest Books in the English Language," i (1866), 22. Collier's view is adopted by Halkett and Laing, *Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous Literature*, ii (1926), 320.

<sup>5</sup> For charitable statements concerning prediction of weather see Fulke, *Antiprognosticon*, trans. Painter, sigs. A4<sup>n</sup> and c7<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> p. 14, note 2.

Written by W. P.' the volume consists of two allied tracts.<sup>1</sup>

Hence it is probably, though perhaps not certain, that the author of one part also wrote the other. Evidence for Perkins's authorship lies in the fact that the second of the two tracts (A Resolution) is found in his Works, iii (1613), 653-67.<sup>2</sup>

The authority of this collection of Perkins's writings is beyond dispute; for not only were the editors men who had been associated with Perkins at Cambridge, but, in addition, their materials were drawn from 'Treatises in diuers prints and formes of the same Authours owne collection' and were 'newly corrected according to his owne copies.'<sup>3</sup> There can be no reason, therefore, to question Perkins's authorship of 'A Resolution'; and by the same token, 'Foure Great Lyers' seems likely to have come from his hand.

Why, then, was the tract properly called 'Foure Great Lyers' omitted by the editors of the collected works? The answer lies in the ephemeral nature of the skit itself, which holds up to scorn the weather predictions of four contemporary almanac-makers merely by listing their inconsistent prophecies side by side. So trivial a compilation as this would have been out of

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<sup>1</sup> A Resolution, sig. F4<sup>1-v</sup>, arraigns foolish weather prophecies, notably those 1581 and 'the yeare last past' (1584), while 'Foure Great Lyers' is a mischievous compilation of such predictions drawn presumably from almanacs of 1584. In other words, 'Four Great Lyers' serves as an illustration for one of the theses of 'A Resolution.'

<sup>2</sup> 'A Resolution' has a separate title-page which bears the statement, 'Written long since by W. P.' Both the title-page and the prefatory outline which follows it are, moreover, clearly modelled after those of the 1585 edition.

<sup>3</sup> Perkins, Works, i (1612), sig. #2<sup>n</sup> and title-page.



place in the collected writings of a prominent theologian.

Further, though not conclusive, evidence is furnished by one of Perkins's contemporaries. George Carleton, later Bishop of Chichester, took a hand in the bitter quarrel over the validity of judicial astrology which raged between John Chamber and Sir Christopher Heydon. Heydon's defence of the art appeared in 1603 and evoked a reply from Carleton, whose *Ἀστρολογομανία: The Madnesse of Astrologers* (1624) was written, we know, about 1605.<sup>4</sup> Writing at this date, Carleton lists Perkins among the notable opponents of astrology, indeed among those who 'haue broken into a choller against it . . . In later times Ficus, Caluin, Chambers, Perkins, and for Learning and Piety, the honour of this Age, King Iames.'<sup>5</sup> The point to notice about Carleton's allusion is that he includes Perkins among those who have written at some length against the art, or, as Carleton puts it, 'these who haue expressly written against Astrology.'<sup>6</sup> There had been, indeed, occasional flank assaults on the theories and practices of astrology in Perkins's devotional tracts:<sup>7</sup> but since

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<sup>4</sup> Carleton, op. cit., title-page, where it is said that the work was 'written neere vpon twenty yeares ago, by G. C. and by permission of the Author set forth'. This is confirmed in the Dedication (sig. A3<sup>r</sup>) by Thomas Vicars, whose statement concerning the date of composition must bear weight, for he was, according to Anthony à Wood, Carleton's son-in-law. See *Athenae Oxonienses*, ed. Bliss, II (1815), 424.

<sup>5</sup> Carleton, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> As in 'A Golden Chaine (1591), An Exposition of the Symbole or Creed (1595), A Commentarie upon the Epistle to Galatians (1604). See *Workes*, I (1612), 43-4, 291, and II (1613) 286-7.

the pamphlet of 1585 was the only extended refutation of the art which Perkins had published in 1605, when Carleton was writing, it seems probable that Carleton was fully aware of the identity of the W. P. who had composed 'Foure Great Lyers'.

## APPENDIX III

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF COVENANT THEOLOGY

Cocceius has been termed the father of the Covenant Theology. It is generally agreed that the concept was developed long before he proclaimed it. Even by the time of William Perkins it was a well established belief. Zacharias Ursinus who preceded Perkins in time taught the doctrine.

Cocceius was significant in that he was the one who popularized the new method in contrast to the Scholastic method of theological study that had gripped the Christian Church for so long. He sought to substitute a more Bible-centered approach to theology. This, of course, was not unique to Cocceius.

The Covenant idea is not found at all in the writings of the Church Fathers, though many of the elements which comprise the idea are to be found. For example, there are to be found among other elements, the possibility of sin and death and free choice. Augustine perhaps came the closest in his City of God when he mentioned the relationship in which Adam stood originally before God. He termed it 'testamentum' or 'pactum', a covenant. In studying the Scholastic and Reformers' writings, all the elements comprising Covenant Theology are found, but the Covenant idea as such had not yet developed. Heinrich Hepp indicated that Bullinger was the first to comprehend the doctrine of Covenant relationship in the Ordo Salutis as described in his Com-

pendium religionis Christianae.<sup>1</sup> He added however, "Als der eigentliche Begründer der ausgebildeten Föderaltheologie ist aber Kaspar Olevian anzusehen, . . ."<sup>2</sup> Olevian's writings displayed for the first time the basic principle of the whole system of thought. Then the idea spread. From Switzerland and Germany it passed over to the Netherlands and on to England and Scotland. One could not say dogmatically that Perkins was the first in England to grasp the idea of the Covenant relationship. He was the first to popularize it, however. This can be substantiated by a study of the immediate spread of the concept among his students, as William Ames, who took the idea back to Holland, John Robinson, Robert Baines, and others on the Continent as Voetius, who was greatly influenced by his treatises that were translated into Latin and Dutch.

The publication of Perkins' treatises must have had some influence as to the spread of the Covenant concept in Holland before William Ames migrated there. His writing had gone through several editions by that time, and had been translated into several languages.

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<sup>1</sup> Heppe, Heinrich, Geschichte Des Pietismus und der Mystik in Der Reformirten Kirche, (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1879), pp. 207-208.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 210. "However Casper Olevian is the true founder as to the form of Federal theology." Cf. ibid., pp. 204-240 for a fuller history of the Covenant theology. Cf. also Miller, Perry, Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, (Vol. XXII, Boston, 1937), pp. 258-259, footnote.

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\_\_\_\_\_ . Catholicus reformatus; hoc est, Expositio et  
declaratio quæ ostendit quatenus Ecclesiæ ex  
Dæi verbo reformatæ in multis . . . religionis  
capitibus cum Ecclesia Rom. . . consentiunt,  
ac in quibus . . . ab ea dissentiunt . . .  
Addita est brevis quædam Admonitio ad eos qui  
dediti sunt Rom. Ecclesiæ. . . Omnia primo  
conscripta . . . lingua Anglicana a . . . G.  
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